PATTERNS OF POWER · MEIJI JAPAN

# Meiji Japan

*The Complete Study · 1858 — 1868 — 1912*

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with Claude (Anthropic) · 2026

*held as tested, not revealed*

# PREFACE AND OUTLINE

*Front matter · how this study was made, the disciplines it holds itself to, and a map of its fourteen parts*

## The collaboration

This is a case study in the Patterns of Power series, applying the series' framework to the Meiji order in Japan — from the commercial treaties imposed on the shogunate in 1858, through the decree of January 1868 that abolished it, to the death of the emperor in 1912 and the ministerial vacancy of the winter that followed. The framework is a lens for reading how any order of power is founded, dressed and held: the floor of force beneath every order; the robe of doctrine laid over the floor to make the force cheap; the settlement that divides the spoils among the armed; the formation that installs in a child, before he can refuse it, the map of whom to defer to and whom to believe; the cost column in which each subject prices defection; the seam that manages the belief on which the whole depends; the default by which an elite coordinates without instruction, each man defending the arrangement by defending himself; and — running through all of it — position logic, the proposition that rulers in like positions converge on like solutions because a position poses a problem with only a few good answers.

Meiji Japan was chosen because it isolates three variables the series had been carrying without separating them.

The first is inheritance. Every founding in this collection begins with a taking: an armed group arrives, breaks something, and divides what is left. This one does not. The men who held Kyoto in January 1868 acquired a country whose productive apparatus was undamaged, whose population was already registered, whose villages already collected their own taxes and whose commercial economy was already national — and acquired, inseparably and in the same motion, a stipend obligation running at a third of all revenue for six per cent of the people, domain debts averaging three years' income, and treaties they had not signed and could not revise. The founding transaction was an assumption of liabilities. Almost every decision of the following decade is legible as the servicing or repudiation of an inherited balance sheet, and the creditor a new government chooses to pay turns out to identify, more exactly than anything it says, the audience whose recognition it believes it cannot do without.

The second is formation supplied rather than withheld. The colonial cases in this collection are shaped by a conqueror who declines to form the majority, on the sound reasoning that forming them would oblige him to admit them — with the result that the formation already running holds the field, because there is no unformed condition for a person to be left in. Japan supplies the inverse: a native state, formed by the order it was replacing, that set out to form its entire population deliberately, universally and fast. What it discovered in the attempt is that a dense incumbent formation is not only an obstacle but the cheapest available apparatus, and that the intelligent move is to annex it — the writing school converted, the writing master appointed, the class held in the temple — rather than to replace it.

The third is that this is the only order in the collection which appears on both sides of the same relationship, inside a single working lifetime. In 1858 the treaties gave the western powers consular jurisdiction on Japanese soil and a tariff Japan could not set. In 1876, eighteen years later, two future elder statesmen signed at Kanghwa a treaty giving Japan consular jurisdiction in Korea and, through its annexed trade regulations, a rate of duty of nothing — worse than what Japan had itself suffered, and drafted by men who had spent their careers denouncing it. That eighteen-year interval is the study's most useful contribution to the collection, because it removes an inference the material has been inviting: the pattern this project has traced through the French in Algeria and the British in Kenya is not a European pathology or a cultural inheritance. It is what a state with a floor does toward a state without one, and it is available to anyone who acquires one.

The study was built the way the series is built, one module at a time. The author brought the framework, the direction and the judgement of the whole, and held the collaboration to its disciplines; Claude, Anthropic's model, did the research — verifying load-bearing quotations, dates and figures by search against sources reproducing the primary text before any module was written — and produced the drafts, applying the framework module by module, each presented and confirmed before the next was begun. A seed written by an earlier Claude supplied a starting spine and was wrong in several places; where the research contradicted it, or contradicted the framework's own expectation, the research was followed. The framework is scaffolding and a lens, not a cage, and several of this study's better findings are corrections to what it had predicted.

## The disciplines

*The method of information asymmetry.* The study's engine throughout is the exact public words set beside the exact words of the ground: the Charter Oath read to the

assembled nobility on 6 April 1868 beside the notice boards posted at every crossroads on the 7th, in phonetic script a villager could read, telling him that combining was a crime and that a reward would be given; the proclamation abolishing the outcaste categories beside the administrative instruction circulated the same day directing prefectures to report their formerly exempt land to the Ministry of Finance; the lifting of the prohibition on Christianity in 1873, declared to foreign governments and not declared at home. The arithmetic is laid out and the sum left to the reader. The conclusion is not preached.

*Quotation.* Public-domain primary sources — laws, decrees, rescripts, treaty texts, notice boards, parliamentary speeches — are quoted exactly, in the original, with a translation, at the length the argument needs. The translations are the collaboration's own. Modern copyrighted scholarship is paraphrased, briefly, and credited.

*No fabrication.* No quotation, date, attribution or figure is invented or reconstructed from memory. What could not be verified is dropped or flagged, never guessed, and this study flags a good deal: two of its most load-bearing quotations survive here through single reproductions of records the collaboration has not seen, and both are marked in the module that uses them. Contested figures are given as ranges — the Boshin dead, the Satsuma rebellion casualties, the domain debt total, the Taiwan pacification toll — and the reason for each span is stated where it matters.

*Gravity without partisanship.* Suffering is held with gravity, and the study refuses both flattery and demonisation. Its watchword is that legibility is not pardon: to understand how a thing was done is not to forgive its being done. Equally, naming an origin as built is not a debunking. The Tokugawa settlement this order replaced had become genuinely the world its holders lived in, and the men who defended it were not dupes; nor were the men and women whom the Meiji school and the Meiji rescript formed into something new.

*Contribution.* Every module returns a refinement to the framework, stated plainly in its closing section, rather than merely applying the framework to the case.

*Held as tested, not revealed.* The pattern is treated as something discovered and tested against the evidence, not handed down as doctrine — a tendency, never a law, corrected wherever the record refuses it.

## What the study returned

Stated compactly, and argued in the modules: that where a new order inherits a functioning apparatus rather than destroying one, its first binding constraint is not the ruled but the previous order's creditors; that a centre can borrow a floor, and that the thing needing explanation is the lending, which marks the moment a faction stops

occupying two positions and begins occupying one; that a founding is complete when its founders die and nothing happens; that where a state taxes in money a household that earns in kind, the conversion rate is the tax rate, and it is set administratively rather than legislatively; that a registration is a distribution, the choice of whose name goes in the box being made for reasons of collection and its distributive consequence arriving a generation later; that where a population already holds a dense morality the cheap robe is a re-termination rather than a creed, so that the diagnostic is a document's final clause and not its content; that legislated ritual dates a robe's incompleteness; that an order facing audiences it cannot let meet does not lie to them but issues separately true statements and manages their circulation; that a dense incumbent formation is best annexed rather than replaced, the test being who stands at the front of the classroom in year three and what the building was in year zero; that formation's product is the cast and not the creed, so the question is not what a system teaches but whom it authorises; that exit which remits is not exit but an instrument of the state; that a cost column is measured by the narrowness of the corridor between submission and insurrection rather than by the frequency of force; that monetisation moves rather than abolishes extraction in kind, and whoever stands on the boundary between the two media captures the difference; that where an indirect tax becomes a state's principal revenue, the operative statute is the one abolishing the untaxed substitute; that a new order's hierarchy of persons is stated more plainly in its defamation law than in its constitution, because a defamation law must enumerate to function; that competent suppression moves from punishing the speaker to disabling the channel; that a distant audience checks an order only while it holds something the order cannot otherwise obtain, so that success in obtaining it abolishes the check; that a default is broken not by the group that stops benefiting but by the group whose position can be defended without defending the arrangement, and that insulation combined with an independent instrument of force is a second sovereign; that where an apex is made unarguable in order to be cheap, coordination migrates to an informal body which can never be reformed or succeeded because it does not formally exist; that a faction bargaining inside a hierarchy must convert its interest into a general principle to make it arguable, and the generality rather than the interest is what accretes as liberty; that the subject matter on which an order's protections are suspended identifies the load-bearing member of its robe; that an elite fracture produces structural change only where the fracturing group can be neither destroyed nor bought; that the metabolic ledger tracks the disruption of coordination and not the change of rulers, so that a transfer of an intact apparatus incurs no debt however total the political rupture; that an accounting confined to the sword will undercount a modernising order, whose

principal killing is administrative; that the cost of an insulated component is measurable in its dead; and that the colonial pattern is a property of position rather than of people.

## The arc

A landscape opening and twelve modules, each with a framework function and its own evocative title.

**Landscape — what was inherited.** *A Reward Will Be Given.* A working country handed over intact with its accounts payable; a few dozen men in their thirties holding a capital city, a boy, a printing press and ten thousand borrowed ryō; and two documents issued one day apart in April 1868 to two audiences that were not permitted to meet.

**1 — The Floor of Force.** *With Their Own Living Blood.* A founding that cost eight thousand lives, a government that commanded no soldiers, an army borrowed from three domains and spent abolishing two hundred and sixty — and a conscription rescript that stated the whole Meiji method in one clause while denouncing the class that wrote it.

**2 — The Settlement.** *Five Yen Nineteen Sen.* A certificate that made an owner because somebody had to be dunned, a stipend converted into the capital of the banking system, an emancipation that arrived with an instruction to the Ministry of Finance, and a conversion rate forty-eight per cent above the market that no statute named.

**3 — The Robe.** *The Only Axis.* A state teaching with missionaries that collapsed in two years, a rescript twenty years later that asked the population to believe nothing it did not already believe, and the man who designed the constitution explaining in a closed room why the throne would have to do the work that religion does elsewhere.

**4 — Formation.** *Upon the Brain, in Earliest Childhood.* An imported schooling that was burned down, a temple that became a schoolhouse with the same master in it, a court adviser writing down the timing lever in 1879 — and a morality that never changed while the map of authority underneath it was rebuilt completely.

**5 — The Cost Column.** *Twenty-Eight Thousand for Six Hundred Places.* What compliance bought the ordinary Japanese and what refusal cost him; a rising that asked for the schools to be shut for three years; an emigration that functioned as a valve rather than a check; and the one thing never permitted for thirty-two years.

**6 — Extraction.** *Thirty-Four, Thirty-Four, Thirty-Two.* A reform that left the aggregate tax unchanged and moved the risk, a landlord standing on the boundary between two currencies, a household forbidden to brew its own — and an indemnity

of which eighty-five per cent went to the armed forces and under one per cent to the ironworks in the textbooks.

**7 — Information and Suppression.** *The Private Person Came Fourth.* A defamation law built from a liberal petition and issued with the throne at the top of it, a press that held its own funeral, a government that learned to close channels rather than gaol writers, and a foreign audience that stopped mattering the moment the treaties were revised.

**8 — Elite Coordination and the Default.** *No Successor Was Named.* An arrangement in which every group with standing was given a position worth defending, a coordinating body of nine men with no legal existence, and one component insulated so thoroughly that it could obtain what it wanted by breaking the government rather than bargaining with it.

**9 — Plurality or Foreclosure.** *The Way of Speech Is Blocked.* A parliament demanded by the losers of one cabinet quarrel and granted by the winner of the next, a judge who defied his government on nationalist grounds and left the rule of law behind him, and protections whose exact boundary can be read off the subject they refused to cover.

**10 — Change and Collapse.** *A Parapet of the Throne.* A rising of tens of thousands that produced martial law and a change of prime minister, the same crowd eight years later that brought a government down in fifty-three days, and the single variable between them.

**11 — The Grim Accounting.** *Scarcely Paralleled, East or West.* A founding too cheap in blood to need forgetting, a metabolic note that was never called, twenty-seven thousand men killed by an institution that could not be corrected, and sixteen thousand women a year who appear on no casualty list.

**12 — Convergence and Divergence.** *Eighteen Years.* Where this case falls in the collection; the only order in it that ran the pattern from both ends inside one generation; and the strongest case for the defence, stated at its full weight in its own voice and answered without flinching.

## A note on sources.

This front matter is descriptive and makes no primary-source claims of its own; every factual assertion summarised here is sourced in the module that carries it, in that module's own closing note. Readers should note in particular two limitations that bear on the whole. This study was unable to consult archival material of any kind, and rests throughout on published primary texts reproduced in databases and reference works — chiefly the National Archives of Japan, the National Diet Library, the Japan Center

for Asian Historical Records, the Ministry of Education's official history, the Bank of Japan's Institute for Monetary and Economic Studies, and the standard Japanese encyclopaedias. And two of its load-bearing quotations rest on single reproductions: Itō Hirobumi's statement to the Privy Council of 18 June 1888, which is cited in Modules 3, 8, 9 and 12 and has not been checked against the Council's minutes; and the phrase from the army's own medical history quoted as the title of Module 11, taken at second hand from a medical journal article. Both are flagged where they are used. The Taiwan casualty figures in Modules 11 and 12 are politically contested claims from Chinese-language sources, given as ranges and expressly not adopted.

# A REWARD WILL BE GIVEN

*Landscape · the working order the new men inherited, the bill that came with it, and the position from which they read both*

## The men in the room

On the ninth day of the twelfth month of Keiō 3 — 3 January 1868 by the calendar the country would adopt five years later — troops from five domains closed the nine gates of the Kyoto palace, excluded the court nobles friendly to the Tokugawa house along with the Aizu and Kuwana men who had been guarding the place, and in the small hall inside issued a decree in the name of a boy of fifteen. The decree abolished the shogunate. In the same sentence it abolished the regency and the office of chancellor, which had belonged to the Fujiwara for a thousand years and had nothing to do with the Tokugawa at all. It replaced both with three provisional offices — a president, a body of deliberators, and a body of councillors — and it grounded the whole arrangement in a phrase reaching back past every institution then standing in Japan: *shoji Jinmu sōgyō no hajime ni motozuki* — "in all things founded upon the beginning of Jinmu's creation."

The list of names appended to the decree is the first inventory this study needs, because it shows who was in the room and who was not. The president was an imperial prince. The deliberators were princes, five senior court nobles, and the lords of Owari, Echizen, Aki, Tosa and Satsuma. The councillors were five court nobles and then, in the plainest possible notation, three men from each of the participating domains — named in the record not individually but by domain and by number, three from Owari, three from Echizen, three from Aki, three from Tosa. The men who would actually run Japan for the next thirty years enter the founding document of the state they built as a headcount.

They were young, and they were from a very small number of places. The emperor was fifteen. Itō Hirobumi was twenty-six, Yamagata Aritomo and Ōkuma Shigenobu twenty-nine, Itagaki Taisuke and Sanjō Sanetomi thirty, Inoue Kaoru thirty-two, Etō Shinpei thirty-three, Kido Takayoshi thirty-four, Ōkubo Toshimichi thirty-seven. Saigō Takamori, the eldest of the working group at thirty-nine, was already being described as the senior man. Iwakura Tomomi, at forty-two, was the old head, and he was a court noble of middling rank who had been in disgrace and confinement five years earlier.

Mori Arinori, who would design the school system, was twenty. Of the domains, Satsuma and Chōshū supplied the decisive weight; Tosa and Hizen supplied the rest of the front rank; and the arrangement was formalised with almost comic precision three and a half years later, when the four councillorships that constituted the real cabinet were filled with exactly one man from each — Kido for Chōshū, Saigō for Satsuma, Ōkuma for Hizen, Itagaki for Tosa. Beneath that quartet the ministries filled up from the same four registers.

This is a smaller group than it first appears, and the smallness is a finding rather than a colour detail. The Tokugawa order had run on some two hundred and sixty daimyō houses, a shogunal bureaucracy of twenty-odd thousand direct vassals, and the retainer bands of every domain in the country. The men who took the machine over and made the decisions of the first decade can be counted in the low dozens, and they had almost all been born into the same stratum: the lower and middling ranks of the warrior class, the class that the preceding order had formed as fighters, forbidden by law to take up any other occupation, paid in a fixed measure of rice whose purchasing power had fallen for two centuries, and bred in numbers the settlement had never had positions for. They were, in the precise sense, the surplus the old arrangement had manufactured and could not seat. They did not rise. They were promoted, inside two domain governments that had been driven by their own insolvency to promote on ability, and they arrived at the top of Japan with the habits of men who had spent their careers running a bankrupt province.

## What was standing

The single most important fact about the transition of 1868 is negative: almost nothing was broken. The fighting that ended the shogunate was short, geographically confined, and fought largely by professionals against professionals. There was no general devastation of the countryside, no destruction of irrigation works, no collapse of the granaries, no interruption of the planting and harvest cycle across the country as a whole. The productive apparatus of Japan passed from one set of hands to another substantially intact, and the population resumed growing almost at once.

What passed with it was a going concern of a kind very few conquerors in this collection have ever inherited. There was a registered population: every person in the country had been written annually into a book kept by his own neighbours, and the new government's first national census in 1872 was built on a form circulated by Kyoto prefecture whose own ancestor was a registration procedure drafted in Chōshū. The count it returned was 33.11 million, a figure the compilers themselves knew to be short — a later revision put it nearer 34.8 million, and the discrepancy has never been settled.

A country that already knows how to count itself, and whose people are already accustomed to being counted, is worth an administrative generation to whoever takes it over.

There was a tax machine that collected through corporate bodies rather than from individuals: the village, not the household, was assessed, and the village allocated internally and delivered the total. There was a literate administrative stratum in every village — the headmen who kept the books, negotiated the assessment, and petitioned when the harvest failed. There was a commercial economy with credit instruments, futures trading, a national price for rice, and merchant houses whose reach ran the length of the archipelago. There were cities, one of them among the largest on earth. There was a road system, and a coastal shipping trade, and a body of commercial custom that functioned as law.

And there were two domain governments that had already built the beginnings of an industrial and military establishment. Satsuma had begun in 1851, under Shimazu Nariakira, a works at Iso outside Kagoshima — a reverberatory furnace for casting iron cannon, shipbuilding, iron-working, spinning, glass, movable-type printing — assembled out of translated Dutch technical manuals. A British squadron burned it in 1863 and Satsuma rebuilt it. Chōshū had its own arsenal, its own irregular units of mixed peasant and merchant soldiers under arms, and modern rifles bought through smugglers. Both domains had also done something rarer and more consequential, which is treated below.

There is one more item in this column, and it is the ugliest thing in the box. The money that bought Satsuma's rifles and its steamships came in substantial part from a sugar monopoly worked in the Amami islands, outside Satsuma's own assessed figure and outside the shogunate's registers, by people who were flogged for tasting the cane and whose villages emptied into debt bondage. The armed capacity that made the Restoration possible was purchased with an atrocity the previous order had arranged not to count. The new men inherited that too, and inherited it without the accounts, because there were none.

## What was owed

Against all of that stood a set of obligations which, taken together, come close to being the actual subject of the first decade of Meiji government.

The largest was the warrior class. When the domains were abolished in 1871 the central government took over the whole revenue of the country and, with it, the whole stipend obligation of every retainer band in Japan. The Bank of Japan's own reconstruction of the early Meiji accounts puts the stipend bill at 34.6 million yen in

1869 — and that was already after cuts. Converted at the rice prices of the time, the bakumatsu obligation had stood nearer 60 million. In the accounting periods immediately after the abolition of the domains, stipends ran at 33.5 per cent of ordinary expenditure, 33.1 per cent of ordinary revenue, and 42.5 per cent of land tax receipts — more than the army and navy and all the civil ministries combined. The recipients were the *kazoku* and *shizoku*, and the 1872 register counted 258,952 shizoku households containing 1,282,167 people, plus 166,873 *sotsu* households containing 659,074 more; with the smaller categories the whole stratum came to about six per cent of the population. A third of the state's money was going to a twentieth of its people, in exchange for a military service that the same government was in the process of abolishing.

The second obligation was the debt. When the government ordered the domains to report their liabilities, 276 of them returned figures totalling 74.1 million yen in domestic borrowing, alongside 39.1 million yen of domain paper currency in circulation and 4.0 million yen of foreign debt. Stripping out the items that were not properly domain obligations at all leaves a defensible total of about 104.8 million yen — roughly a fifth of the country's estimated national expenditure in 1874, about 1.6 times the government's annual ordinary revenue, about twice its land tax receipts. Two independent reconstructions put the domain-note figure much higher and the total as high as 165 million; the range should be held open. Behind the aggregate lay the individual position, which after the Boshin War averaged debts of roughly three times annual income per domain. Several lords — Tottori, Nagoya, Kumamoto, Morioka — asked to be relieved of their domains before anyone abolished them.

The third obligation was to foreigners, and it was of a different order because it could not be repudiated. The five commercial treaties signed in 1858 gave the treaty powers consular jurisdiction over their own nationals on Japanese soil, denied Japan the right to set its own tariffs, and granted most-favoured-nation treatment running one way only. A supplementary convention of 1866 cut import duties to a flat five per cent of declared value, payable in silver. Whatever the new government wanted to do — build a navy, protect an industry, run a court — the terms on which it could do it had been fixed by an agreement its members had spent the previous decade denouncing, and which they now had to honour.

How much these three obligations differed in weight can be read directly off the settlement of them, and the arithmetic is the sharpest single fact in this landscape. Of the domestic domain debt, the government cancelled everything contracted before 1843 outright, on the reasoning that the shogunate's own remission order of that year had already dealt with it; assumed the 1844–67 borrowings as bonds bearing no

interest at all, redeemable over fifty years; and assumed the 1868–72 borrowings at four per cent over twenty-five years after a three-year holiday on principal. The headline write-off was 53.9 per cent of the domain debt and 36.2 per cent of the domain notes, about 47 per cent of the domestic total. Valued at what the resulting paper actually fetched in the Tokyo market in early 1875 — sixteen per cent of face for the old bonds, fifty-four for the new — the effective repudiation was about 85 per cent, which the Bank of Japan's own historian describes as very close to a default. The foreign debt, by contrast, was settled at 92.2 per cent, in cash.

A government that repudiates five-sixths of what it owes to its own merchants and pays nine-tenths of what it owes to foreigners has told you, without saying anything, whose belief it thinks it needs.

## Ten thousand ryō from a cellar

It is worth being exact about what this government actually had in hand at the moment it assumed those liabilities, because the gap between the size of the obligations and the size of the treasury is the whole explanation of the first decade's improvisations.

On the last day of Keiō 3, the House of Mitsui gave the new authority a thousand ryō. On the nineteenth day of the first month of Keiō 4 — 12 February 1868, with the fighting at Toba-Fushimi a fortnight old — Mitsui, Ono and Shimada together handed over ten thousand ryō, drawn from the reserve kept in the cellar of the Kyoto exchange shop, and received a receipt written on a sheet of paper two feet by one and a half in characters so large that the names of the three houses supplying the money are the smallest thing on it. In the same month a conference adopted the proposal of Yuri Kimimasa, councillor for accounts: three million ryō to be raised from the wealthy of Kyoto and Osaka and their hinterlands, and thirty million ryō of paper notes to be printed. The notes were proclaimed in the intercalary fourth month and issued from June, and the mechanism by which they were put into circulation is itself a portrait of the position: the government lent them to the domains, at the rate of ten thousand ryō for every ten thousand koku of assessment, so that the domains could lend them on to producers. It was a central bank operating through the very governments it was about to abolish.

Of the roughly 51.3 million yen the government spent between the end of Keiō 3 and the autumn of 1869 — the Boshin War included — about 48 million was financed by printing. When it did borrow abroad, in London in 1870 for the railway, it paid nine per cent over thirteen years and pledged the entire customs revenue as security, on terms that a later Japanese analyst compared unfavourably with every sovereign borrower of the period except Honduras. When it borrowed again in 1873 to fund the

stipend buy-out, it paid seven per cent, issued at 92.5, and pledged four hundred thousand koku of land-tax rice.

This is the correct picture of the Meiji state at its founding, and it is very far from the one the state's own later account supplies. Not a designing intelligence surveying the world's institutions and choosing among them, but a few dozen men in their thirties holding a capital city, a boy, a printing press, and a promissory note to three money-changers, who had just made themselves liable for the debts of two hundred and sixty bankrupt principalities and the salaries of two million people they intended to put out of work.

## What could be seen from there

Position fixes not only what a man can do but what he can see, and this case is peculiar in the collection because several of the men in the position had committed a capital crime in order to widen their own field of vision before they held it.

What was visible to any literate Japanese by the 1860s, without leaving home, was China. Wei Yuan's *Haiguo tuzhi* — an illustrated survey of the maritime nations, compiled in the humiliation following the Nanjing treaty and arguing that China must master the techniques of the foreigners in order to control them — reached Japan in 1851. Three years later it was reprinted for the shogunal official Kawaji Toshiakira with reading marks supplied by the Confucian scholar Shionoya Tōin and phonetic glosses on the place-names by the Dutch-studies scholar Mitsukuri Genpo, and between 1854 and 1856 something on the order of twenty-two Japanese editions and partial translations appeared. The book was a modest failure in the country that produced it and a sensation in the country next door. Its readers included Sakuma Shōzan, Yoshida Shōin, Hashimoto Sanai and Saigō Takamori. The lesson available on the page was not abstract: a large, old, administratively sophisticated empire had met the same ships, had lost, and was being taken apart in instalments.

What was visible to a much smaller number of men was the other end of the transaction. In 1863 five Chōshū men, Itō Hirobumi and Inoue Kaoru among them, were smuggled out of Yokohama to London. In 1865 Satsuma sent nineteen — four inspectors and fifteen students from the domain's own school of Western learning — under false names, with orders on paper sending them to survey Koshikijima and Ōshima. Leaving the country was punishable by death. They studied at University College London, which alone among English universities then admitted men without regard to their religion, and a memorial in its quadrangle carries the five Chōshū names and the nineteen from Satsuma. Among them were the first minister of education, the

first head of the national museum, and the man who would be called the maker of modern Osaka.

The framework this study is written inside holds that a position hands a person his epistemology before it hands him his options, and that the honest way to read a decision is to reconstruct what the decider could actually see from where he stood. Here a handful of men in a subordinate position paid a capital risk to enlarge the field before the decisions came — and the size of the price is a measure of how much they thought the enlargement was worth. When those men later chose foreign models to copy, they were not choosing from a catalogue of hearsay. Several of them had been in the buildings.

That is the corpus's first case of it, and it should not be over-read. The men who had gone abroad were a handful among a few dozen; the great majority of those making decisions in 1868 had seen nothing but Japan, and the country's picture of the outside world had for two centuries run through four licensed gateways under the centre's hand. But the handful were disproportionately the men who ran the technical ministries, and within three years of taking power the government would send half its own leadership abroad for eighteen months to look — which no other order in this collection has done, and which is the deliberate widening of a field of vision by the people whose decisions the field would govern.

## The order they restored was itself a conquest

A conqueror never meets a baseline. The order the Meiji men reached past was itself the residue of an earlier taking that had gone so deep it had stopped looking like one, and here there are two such layers stacked, which is why the reactivation worked as well as it did.

The nearer layer is the Tokugawa settlement: an armed division of the spoils of a hundred years of general war, imposed between 1600 and 1615, demonstrated once more in 1638, and then held for fifteen generations without a battle, until the fixing of persons and status and place it required had become simply the shape of the world for everyone born inside it. By 1868 nobody in Japan experienced hereditary status, the annual registration of every person in a temple book, or the impossibility of leaving one's village as the terms of a victor's settlement. They were the furniture of reality. That the origin was built does not make the belief a fiction; it makes it a thing that was built and then became real, and its reality is exactly why the new men could not simply legislate it away and spent eight years dismantling it piece by piece instead.

The further layer is the throne. The imperial warrant had been drafted into law in 701, on a foundation of descent rather than of righteousness, with the Chinese

doctrine that a dynasty can forfeit heaven's mandate through misgovernment deliberately declined. The consequence, over the following millennium, was an apex that could not be delegitimated because there were no grounds on which to do it — and therefore could not be replaced, and therefore could be rented. Every warrior government from the twelfth century onwards had governed by commission from a court it did not obey and could not depose. That arrangement, too, was the naturalised residue of a much older consolidation of the Yamato plain, and by the nineteenth century nobody in Japan experienced it as anything but a fact of nature.

What happened in January 1868 was that a group of men took an irrevocable, unlosable warrant that had been ceremonial for seven hundred years and put a living fifteen-year-old inside it. The decree's reach past the shogunate, past the regency, past the Fujiwara, to the mythical first emperor is not decoration; it is the legal mechanism, because founding the new arrangement on the oldest possible layer let it abolish every institution above that layer in a single clause. It is the cheapest robe available anywhere in this collection, and the study will have to ask, later and carefully, what it cost — because a sovereign who cannot be delegitimated also cannot be overruled.

## The fourteenth and the fifteenth

Two documents, issued one day apart in the spring of 1868, show more clearly than any analysis what the new men intended to keep and what they intended to promise, and to whom.

On the fourteenth day of the third month — 6 April 1868 — the emperor assembled the court nobles, the lords, and the officials in the Shishinden of the Kyoto palace, and in the form of an oath sworn to the gods of heaven and earth had read out five articles:

一 廣ク會議ヲ興シ萬機公論ニ決スヘシ
一 上下心ヲ一ニシテ盛ニ經綸ヲ行フヘシ
一 官武一途庶民ニ至ル迄各其志ヲ遂ケ人心ヲシテ倦マサラシメン事ヲ要ス
一 舊來ノ陋習ヲ破リ天地ノ公道ニ基クヘシ
一 智識ヲ世界ニ求メ大ニ皇基ヲ振起スヘシ

Broadly shall assemblies be convened and all matters decided by public discussion. High and low shall be of one mind and vigorously carry out the administration of affairs. Officials and warriors and the common people down to the least of them shall each be allowed to pursue his own calling, so that there may be no discontent. The evil

customs of former times shall be broken off and all shall be based upon the just laws of heaven and earth. Knowledge shall be sought throughout the world, and thereby shall the foundations of imperial rule be strengthened.

The drafting of the first article is the most informative fact about the document. Yuri Kimimasa of Fukui wrote the original as a statement of principle for a council of nobles and lords. Fukuoka Takachika of Tosa revised it and inserted the words *rekkō kaigi* — a conference of the feudal lords. Kido Takayoshi struck that phrase out and wrote in its place "broadly shall assemblies be convened," precisely in order that the document should centre on the throne rather than on the daimyō. Standard Japanese reference treatment is blunt about what remained: the "assembly" meant a conference of lords, and the "common people" meant the wealthy farmers and merchants. The article that would be quoted for eighty years as the charter of Japanese constitutional government was, in 1868, a factional victory over a rival draft about who should sit in a council of about three hundred men.

The Oath was communicated to the court nobles and the lords. It was not posted.

On the fifteenth day of the third month, the day after, the Council of State ordered every domain to take down the shogunate's notice boards from the crossroads and the market places where they had stood for two centuries and to put up five new ones. The first three were designated *sadame*, permanent law. They read, in phonetic script that an ordinary villager could actually read:

The first: that a person shall keep straight the five relations; that the widowed, the orphaned and the crippled shall be pitied; that there shall be no such wickedness as killing men, burning houses, or stealing goods.

The second, entire:

> 何事によらすよろしからさる事に大勢申合せ候をととうととなへ、ととうしてしひてねかひ事くわたつるをごうそといひ、あるひは申合せ居町居村をたちのき候をてうさんと申す、堅く御法度たり、若右類の儀これあらは早々其筋の役所へ申出へし、御ほうひ下さるへく事

Whatever the matter, when a great number agree together upon something improper, that is called forming a band; when, having formed a band, they press a petition by force, that is called forcible appeal; and when by agreement they quit the town or village where they live, that is called absconding. These are strictly forbidden. Should any such thing occur, report it at once to the office concerned. A reward will be given.

The third: that the Christian sect is strictly prohibited; that any suspicious person shall be reported to the office concerned; and — the same six characters again — that a reward will be given.

The first three boards are the Tokugawa order's own policy toward its subjects, continued without amendment by the government that had abolished it. Combination, collective petition, and flight had been the three things a Japanese village could actually do, and all three remained crimes, and informing on one's neighbours remained a paid occupation. The fourth board was new: it announced that the court now conducted foreign relations directly, that the treaties would be performed according to the law of nations, and that anyone who harmed a foreigner would be punished according to the gravity of the offence — a man of samurai rank being struck from the register of his class. The fifth forbade warriors and commoners alike to abscond from their home provinces, and in the same breath declared that the way of speech was opened and that any man with a proposal for the good of the imperial country might submit it to the Council of State.

Read the two documents together and the arithmetic does not need help. To the assembled nobility, on the fourteenth: assemblies shall be convened and all matters decided by public discussion. To the whole population, on the fifteenth, in script chosen so that they could read it: agreeing together is a crime, petitioning together is a crime, leaving is a crime, and there is money in reporting your neighbour. The way of speech is open — upward, individually, to the government. Both statements were true. They were addressed to different people.

The last movement of this sequence identifies the third audience. Forty-eight days after the boards went up, on the fourth day of the intercalary fourth month, the Council of State ordered the third board rewritten: the single clause lumping Christianity together with heterodox sects was split into two separate clauses, and the informer's reward was deleted. The change was made because the foreign ministers had objected. Nothing else about the board changed, and the prohibition on Christianity itself stood until February 1873, by which time it had become an obstacle to treaty revision. The fifth board came down in November 1871; the remaining four in February 1873, on the stated ground that everybody knew them by now.

In the first ten weeks of the new order, then: a promise of councils to the lords, an inherited prohibition to the people, and a change of wording to the foreign powers. Which of the three got an amendment is the answer to the question of whose belief the arrangement was going to have to buy.

## Reading the inheritance against the framework

This collection's template opens a case by asking who held organised violence at the founding and by what act the order was established. Applied here, the questions return an odd answer, and the oddity is what this landscape has to contribute.

There was a founding act of force, and the next module will price it. But the founding *transaction* was not a taking. It was an assumption of liabilities. The men who held Kyoto in January 1868 acquired a country whose productive apparatus was undamaged, whose population was already registered, whose villages already collected their own taxes, and whose commercial economy was already national — and they acquired, in the same motion and inseparably, a stipend obligation running at a third of all revenue for six per cent of the people, domain debts averaging three years' income, a currency system in fragments, and a set of commercial treaties they had not signed and could not revise. Almost every consequential decision of the following decade is legible as the servicing, restructuring or repudiation of that inherited balance sheet: the return of the domain registers, the abolition of the domains, the conversion of stipends into bonds, the reconstruction of the land tax as a fixed money sum, and the settlement of the domain debts at something close to default. The framework should carry the distinction, because it changes what a study looks for. **Where a new order is established by inheriting a functioning apparatus rather than by destroying one, its first binding constraint is not the ruled but the previous order's creditors** — and the creditor a new government chooses to pay identifies the audience whose recognition it believes it cannot do without. Here it paid the foreigners nine-tenths in cash and its own merchants a sixth in paper, three years before anyone in the government said out loud that treaty revision was the object of policy.

Two further things are flagged here and left open, because a landscape that announces its findings has usually manufactured them.

The first concerns the field of vision. This collection's method holds that a position sets the horizon of what a person can consider before it sets the ledger of what he can weigh, and it has generally found that horizon to be given to the actor rather than chosen by him. This case supplies the exception in its cleanest form: men who committed a capital offence to go and look, before they held the position whose decisions the looking would inform. Whether that deliberate widening produced better decisions, or merely produced decisions with a wider menu of mistakes available, is the question this study will have to answer honestly rather than assume.

The second concerns what they did with what they saw. The temptation with Meiji is to write it as a story of choosing among Western models, and the choosing is real — a Prussian constitution, a French then a German army, a British navy, an American then

a French then a German school system. But a model is only adoptable where there is something to fasten it to, and the fastenings were all inherited: a counted population, a village that collected its own taxes, a literate local officer in every hamlet, a warrior stratum with nothing to do, and a throne with a warrant that could not be revoked. The running question of the modules that follow is not which model each institution copied, but which of the available models fitted the machinery already in the box — and whether the fit, rather than the doctrine, is what decided.

## A note on sources.

The primary texts are quoted exactly and in the original. The Restoration decree of Keiō 3/12/9 is quoted from the Council of State's *Shōchokuroku* as reproduced in the "Sekai to Nihon" database maintained by the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies and the Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia at the University of Tokyo; the appended list of the three offices in that reproduction is supplied by its editors from a modern reference work, and its enumeration of domain councillors ("three men from Owari," and so on) does not name Satsuma among the domains supplying three, which conflicts with the standard account and is reported here as it stands rather than corrected. The five articles of the Charter Oath are quoted from the text published by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. The five notice boards of Keiō 4/3/15 are quoted from the same GRIPS–Tokyo database, which reproduces both the original third board (from the holdings of the Aomori Prefectural Museum) and the revised version of the intercalary fourth month (Fukui Prefectural Archives); the translations are this study's own and are offered for correction.

The drafting history of the Charter Oath's first article — Yuri Kimimasa's original, Fukuoka Takachika's insertion of *rekkō kaigi*, and Kido Takayoshi's excision of it — is paraphrased from the National Diet Library's children's-archive commentary on the document and from the Heibonsha and Shōgakukan encyclopaedia entries reproduced by Kotobank, which also supply the gloss that "assembly" meant a conference of lords and "common people" meant wealthy farmers and merchants. The classification of the first three boards as *sadame* and the last two as *oboe*, and the dates of the boards' removal, are from the Yamakawa and Shōgakukan reference entries. The anecdote that Kido had forgotten the Charter Oath's existence when it came up in conversation in Washington in April 1872 appears in the Japanese Wikipedia article on the document and has not been traced here to a primary source; it is not relied upon.

The fiscal figures are drawn overwhelmingly from one modern source and are paraphrased from it: Ōmori Tōru, "Meiji shoki no zaisei kōzō kaikaku, ruiseki saimu

shori to sono eikyō," *Kin'yū Kenkyū* 20:3 (Bank of Japan Institute for Monetary and Economic Studies, 2001). From it come the stipend totals (34,622 thousand yen in 1869; an estimated bakumatsu equivalent of 59,865 thousand yen), the stipend shares of expenditure, revenue and land tax in the accounting periods following the abolition of the domains, the domain-debt survey returns (74,131 thousand yen reported by 276 domains; 39,094 thousand yen of domain notes; 4,002 thousand yen of foreign debt; a defensible total of 104,777 thousand yen, against alternative reconstructions by Yamaguchi and Shinbo running to 112,683 and 165,683 thousand), the comparisons to 1874 national expenditure and to government revenue, the 1872 settlement rules by date of contraction, the write-off percentages including the 85.2 per cent effective figure computed at the 1875 Yasuda valuation, the 92.2 per cent cash settlement of the foreign debt, and the terms of the 1870 and 1873 London issues. Ōmori's own characterisation of the domestic settlement as close to a default is his, not this study's. The population and status figures are from the 1872 Jinshin register as reported in the Japanese reference literature (33.11 million total, with a contested revision to 34.8 million; 258,952 shizoku households and 1,282,167 persons; 166,873 sotsu households and 659,074 persons).

The observation that domain debts after the Boshin War averaged about three times annual income, and the list of lords who petitioned to surrender their domains, are from the Japanese Wikipedia article on the abolition of the domains and should be treated as the received account rather than as a verified computation. The assembly of roughly ten thousand troops from Kagoshima, Yamaguchi and Kōchi in Tokyo before the abolition, and the resulting three urban prefectures and 302 prefectures later consolidated to seventy-two, are from the Shōgakukan and Heibonsha entries reproduced by JapanKnowledge and Kotobank and from the National Archives of Japan's exhibition note on the edict; the phrase from the abolition edict about securing the myriad people within and standing against the myriad nations without is quoted there from a reference work and has not been checked here against the original, and is accordingly not quoted in the body of this module.

The Mitsui contributions of one thousand and ten thousand ryō, and the description of the receipt, are from the Mitsui Bunko's own archival commentary. The three-million-ryō levy and Yuri Kimimasa's thirty-million-ryō note proposal, and the mechanism of lending the notes to the domains at ten thousand ryō per ten thousand koku, are from the Japanese reference literature on the Dajōkan notes; the figure that about 48 million of some 51.3 million yen of spending to the ninth month of Meiji 2 was financed by note issue is quoted in a secondary summary citing Niwa (2005) and Hiromiya (2013) and has not been traced to the underlying accounts.

On the treaties: the 1858 provisions for consular jurisdiction, the absence of tariff autonomy, and the one-way most-favoured-nation clause are standard and are taken from the Japan Customs official history and from Hugh Cortazzi's paper on the revision of Japan's early commercial treaties; the 1866 convention reducing duties to a uniform five per cent of declared value payable in silver is from the same two sources. On the field of the visible: the arrival of the *Haiguo tuzhi* in 1851, the 1854 reprint prepared at Kawaji Toshiakira's request with reading marks by Shionoya Tōin and glosses by Mitsukuri Genpo, and its readership among Sakuma Shōzan, Yoshida Shōin, Hashimoto Sanai and Saigō Takamori are from the National Diet Library's exhibition on the importation of Western knowledge and the National Archives' *bakumatsu* exhibition; the figure of some twenty-two Japanese editions and partial translations concentrated in 1854–56 is attributed in a Japanese educational source to an unnamed researcher and is given here as approximate. The Satsuma mission of nineteen in 1865, its cover story of a survey of Koshikijima and Ōshima, the Chōshū five of 1863, and the University College London memorial are from Japanese reference sources and a UCL-related account. The Shūseikan works, their origin under Shimazu Nariakira from 1851, and their destruction in the 1863 bombardment are from Kagoshima prefectural sources.

The account of the Tokugawa order as a settlement that had become the furniture of reality, of the imperial warrant drafted in 701 without a revocation clause, and of the Amami sugar monopoly and its human cost, rests on the preceding study in this series rather than on new research for this module, and the reservations recorded there about the Amami figures carry forward unchanged. The claim this module makes about founding-by-assumption-of-liabilities is its own argument and is offered for testing.

# WITH THEIR OWN LIVING BLOOD

*Module 1 · The Floor of Force — a government with no soldiers that borrowed an army from three domains, spent it abolishing two hundred and sixty, and then built out of farmers' sons the floor that destroyed the class which had lent it the loan*

## The cheapest founding in the collection

The civil war that ended two and a half centuries of warrior government and installed the order this study is about killed somewhere between eight and nine thousand people. The most commonly cited reckoning gives 8,420 dead in all, 3,550 on the new government's side and 4,690 on the shogunate's, and of those the single largest block — 2,557, including 194 women — belonged to one domain, Aizu, which chose to fight to the end at Wakamatsu. Satsuma lost 514 men and Chōshū 427 in the entire war. The engagement that decided which side would govern Japan, at Toba and Fushimi in the last week of January 1868, killed perhaps 390 men in total, roughly 110 of them on the winning side. Some accounts, counting the deaths from wounds, the camp diseases, and the executions of prisoners, put the whole figure above ten thousand; none puts it near the scale of the war being fought across the Pacific at the same time, which cost the United States something over six hundred thousand.

Edo, the largest city on earth, changed hands without a shot. Katsu Kaishū negotiated its surrender with Saigō Takamori over three days in March 1868; the castle was handed over on the eleventh day of the fourth month; the last shogun went into confinement at Mito. There was no sack, no requisition, no massacre, and no destruction of the administrative records.

That is the arithmetic of the founding act, and it needs explaining rather than admiring, because a cheap conquest almost always means that the thing being conquered had already gone. What the Restoration armies took was not a functioning floor of force but a vacancy where one had been. The shogunate had mobilised roughly a hundred and fifty thousand men against Chōshū in 1866 and lost, because half the coalition would not march; by 1868 the question was not whether the Tokugawa settlement could be beaten but who would occupy the position it had already vacated. The fighting settled that. It did not have to break anything, because the load-bearing structure — the commission from the throne, the obedience of two hundred and sixty armed houses to a centre — had stopped bearing load some years before.

Which leaves the men who won holding a position that had no force attached to it.

## A government with no soldiers

This is the fact from which everything in the first decade follows, and the standard narrative of the Restoration obscures it because the narrative is written around the winners' eventual capacity rather than their capacity at the time.

The armies that fought the Boshin War were domain armies. Satsuma's troops obeyed Satsuma's commanders; Chōshū's obeyed Chōshū's; Tosa's obeyed Itagaki. They fought under an imperial banner and in a coalition, but the coalition was an alliance of principalities, and the government at the centre of it commanded not one soldier of its own. When the war ended, the men went home to their domains, where their stipends were paid.

The reorganisation of 1869 changed nothing about this. In the first month of that year the lords of Chōshū, Satsuma, Hizen and Tosa petitioned to return their registers of land and people to the throne, and the rest followed; from the sixth month the former daimyō were reappointed as governors of the territories they had just surrendered. The National Archives' own commentary on the episode notes drily that it went off without disorder in part because the lords expected to be re-granted what they were handing back, and they were. Two hundred and sixty armed principalities remained armed, remained under their hereditary lords, and remained the only military establishments in Japan.

The government spent 1870 trying to change this by regulation. In the eleventh month came conscription rules; in the twelfth, a law standardising the establishment of standing troops so that the domains' military systems should at least be built to one pattern; in the tenth month the drill of all domain forces had been unified on the French model, following the return from Europe of Yamagata Aritomo and Saigō Jūdō. Tosa went further and earlier: on the twenty-fourth day of the twelfth month of Meiji 3 — 13 February 1871 — Itagaki promulgated in his own domain a declaration of the *principle of the equality of the people*, assigning the duty of national defence to all four estates alike, ahead of the country.

None of this gave the centre a soldier. What did was an arrangement Yamagata put to Saigō in the twelfth month of 1870: that Satsuma, Chōshū and Tosa should each contribute troops to form a force under the direct command of the throne. The order went out in the second month of 1871. The size is given differently in different places — one standard account puts the initial organisation at about six thousand men, another describes the concentration completed by the sixth month as about ten thousand — and the range should be held open rather than resolved. In April two

garrisons were established, one for the Tōsandō with its headquarters at Ishinomaki and one for the Saikaidō at Kokura, manned by troops the domains were required to hand over to the Ministry of Military Affairs; in the eighth month these became four, at Tokyo, Osaka, Kokura and Sendai, each with one to three sub-camps.

So: in the summer of 1871 the central government of Japan possessed, for the first time, an armed force. It consisted of somewhere between six and ten thousand men, lent to it by three of the principalities it was about to abolish.

## The fourteenth of July

On the fourteenth day of the seventh month of Meiji 4 — 29 August 1871 — the governors then in the capital were summoned and read a rescript. Its whole operative content is two clauses, and the first of them states the reason for the second:

> 朕惟フニ更始ノ時ニ際シ、内以テ億兆ヲ保安シ、外以テ万国ト対峙セント欲セハ、宜ク名実相副ヒ、政令一ニ帰セシムヘシ

We consider that, at this time of beginning anew, if we would secure the myriad people within and stand against the myriad nations without, then name and substance must correspond, and the commands of government must return to a single source.

The rest is a complaint that the surrender of the registers two years earlier had produced the name without the substance, that in many places nothing had actually changed, and that the domains were therefore abolished and prefectures put in their place, to cut away redundancy, remove the evil of names without realities, and end the affliction of orders issuing from many directions.

Read the first clause again, because it is the sentence this whole study is built to test. The reorganisation of the internal order is justified, in the founding instrument, by the external position. Not by justice, not by the people's welfare, not by the imperial line — those appear, but as the frame. The operative reason given for destroying the political structure of Japan is that a country which speaks with many voices cannot stand against the nations that had written its tariffs.

The result, that day, was three urban prefectures and 302 prefectures, with the Hokkaidō Colonisation Office alongside; in the eleventh month these were consolidated into seventy-two. The governors were dismissed and ordered to reside in Tokyo. Four councillorships were created the same day and filled with one man each from Kagoshima, Yamaguchi, Kōchi and Saga.

And nothing happened. Not one of two hundred and sixty armed houses fought.

## Why nobody fought

The received explanation is the loaned army, and the loaned army was certainly present — Japanese reference treatments of the episode say plainly that the concentration of those troops was the background force that made the measure possible, while noting that historians disagree about whether the force was assembled *for* the abolition or merely turned out to be available for it. But six to ten thousand men could not have imposed this on a country of thirty-three million against real resistance, and the interesting question is why there was none.

The answer is in the ledgers, and the preceding module priced them. After the Boshin War the domains' debts averaged something on the order of three times their annual income. The lords of Tottori, Nagoya, Kumamoto and Morioka had already petitioned to be relieved of their domains before anyone proposed abolishing them; others maintained the form while having ceased in substance to govern. And the terms on offer were not confiscation. The central government assumed the domain debts. It assumed the stipend obligations of every retainer band in the country. It guaranteed the dismissed governor his house rank and an income, and moved him to the capital.

Put that ledger in front of a daimyō in the summer of 1871 and the arithmetic is not close. He is being asked to surrender an insolvent principality, a payroll he cannot meet, and a body of creditors he cannot satisfy, in exchange for a guaranteed income, a peerage, and an address in Tokyo. The framework's question at every link of a hierarchy is whether the man, in defending his own position, defends the whole arrangement; the honest form of the question here is whether he would be better or worse off if the arrangement ended, and for a bankrupt lord in 1871 the arrangement ending was a discharge.

This should be stated without softening: what looks like the most audacious administrative act in the modern record — a few dozen men abolishing two hundred and sixty armed principalities in an afternoon and being obeyed — was audacious mainly in its timing. The principalities were already failing. The government bought them out of a bankruptcy it then declined to honour in full, writing off, at market valuation of the paper it issued, something like five-sixths of what it had assumed. The lords were paid and the merchants who had lent to the lords were not.

Japanese accounts report the British minister Sir Harry Parkes exclaiming that in Europe such a thing could not have been achieved without years of armed force, and that the emperor had recovered the real power of two hundred domains with a single sheet of paper. The remark is widely repeated in Japanese sources and its provenance has not been traced here to a contemporary English text; it is recorded as an anecdote

rather than relied upon. What can be said without it is that the sheet of paper worked because the domains could not pay their bills.

## Founded on our ancient system, weighing the foreign forms

Eighteen months later the government began building a floor it would own.

On the twenty-eighth day of the eleventh month of Meiji 5 — 28 December 1872 — an imperial rescript and an accompanying admonition were promulgated together. The rescript states the method of the entire Meiji project in one clause, and states it openly:

> 今本邦古昔ノ制ニ基キ、海外各国ノ式ヲ斟酌シ、全国募兵ノ法ヲ設ケ、国家保護ノ基ヲ立ント欲ス

Now, founding upon the system of our own country in ancient times, and weighing the forms of the various nations overseas, we desire to establish a law of nationwide recruitment and to lay the foundation for the protection of the state.

Not adoption. Not imitation. *Weighing* — the word is 斟酌, which is what one does when pouring from several vessels into one. The instrument is Japanese antiquity; the foreign models are consulted against it. Every institutional decision of the following twenty years should be read against that sentence, because the government wrote down its own procedure at the outset and then followed it.

The admonition that followed is the most remarkable document of the early Meiji state, because it is a government composed almost entirely of former samurai denouncing the samurai. It opens by asserting that in the high antiquity of the imperial court there was no one within the seas who was not a soldier, that when there was trouble the sovereign took command and men fit for service were levied, and that when the service ended they went home and were farmers, artisans, merchants. Then:

> 固ヨリ後世ノ双刀ヲ帯ヒ武士ト称シ、抗顔坐食シ、甚シキニ至テハ人ヲ殺シ官其罪ヲ問ハサル者ノ如キニ非ス

They were nothing like the men of later ages who bore two swords and called themselves warriors, who sat and ate without working and looked the world in the face while doing it, and who at the extreme killed a man and were not called to account for the crime by the authorities.

The document then narrates the collapse of the ancient system into military rule after the twelfth century, the division of the country into fiefs and the people into soldiers and farmers, and the restoration: the return of the registers, the reversion in the

year 1871 to the ancient system of prefectures, the reduction of the stipends of the hereditary idle, permission to lay aside the sword. And it draws the conclusion:

> 是ニ於テ士ハ従前ノ士ニ非ス、民ハ従前ノ民ニアラス、均シク皇国一般ノ民ニシテ、国ニ報スルノ道モ固ヨリ其別ナカルヘシ

Herein the samurai is not the samurai of before, and the commoner is not the commoner of before; both alike are simply people of the imperial country, and in the manner of their service to it there can be no distinction.

And then the sentence that would cost the government a year of disorder:

> 凡ソ天地ノ間、一事一物トシテ税アラサルハナシ、以テ国用ニ充ツ。然ラハ則チ人タルモノ固ヨリ心力ヲ尽シ国ニ報セサルヘカラス。西人之ヲ称シテ血税ト云フ、其生血ヲ以テ国ニ報スルノ謂ナリ

Between heaven and earth there is not one thing, not one matter, that is untaxed, and therewith the state's needs are met. That being so, a man must of course exhaust his strength of heart and repay the country. Westerners call this the blood tax: the meaning is that one repays the country with one's own living blood.

The phrase was a literal rendering of the French *impôt du sang*. The men who put it into an imperial admonition had been abroad and had read the term in its European setting, where it was a metaphor of long standing. They wrote it into a document that would be read aloud in villages where it was not.

## What "universal" meant

The conscription law itself followed on the tenth day of the first month of Meiji 6 — 10 January 1873. Its structure was straightforward: men were examined at twenty; from those passing, a lottery selected men for three years in the standing army, followed by four in the reserve; and every man not exempted, from seventeen to forty, went onto the roll of the national levy.

The exemptions are the law. A man was excused if he stood under five *shaku* one *sun* — about 154.5 centimetres. He was excused if he was the head of a household, or its designated heir, or an adopted son living in his adoptive house, or a grandson succeeding to a headship. He was excused if he was an official of a ministry, prefecture or department, a cadet of the military schools, a student of a government school, a man training in medicine, or a man studying abroad. And he was excused if he paid a substitution fee of 270 yen — raised in 1879 to 400.

Two hundred and seventy yen, at a moment when the Bank of Japan's later reconstruction of the accounts put the annual living cost of a lower-class household at somewhere around a hundred to a hundred and twenty. The exit was real and it was priced for people who were not farmers.

The result is the figure that ought to be quoted whenever the phrase *a nation in arms* is used of early Meiji Japan: only some three to four per cent of men reaching twenty actually served. In the first year the army requisitioned 3,272 conscripts from the entire country, distributed with a lopsidedness the sources note without explaining — several hundred from some prefectures, about a hundred from Tokyo. Household headship and heirship alone exempted the eldest sons of every farming family in Japan; adoption exempted anyone whose relatives would arrange it, and adoption for that purpose became common enough to acquire its own name and its own how-to literature. What the law actually produced was a standing army of second and third sons of families too poor to buy the exemption and too small to arrange the adoption.

The framework will need this again in the module on extraction, and the parallel should be noted now rather than argued. Elsewhere in this collection the diagnostic instrument is the medium of payment: a tax levied in a currency a subsistence household does not hold is a labour draft, because the compulsion has been moved out of the statute and into the household's arithmetic. Here the same logic runs in the opposite direction. A levy on bodies, redeemable in cash at a price only the comfortable can meet, is a tax on the poor wearing the language of universal duty — and the compulsion is again invisible to anyone reading the preamble, which says that samurai and commoner alike are simply people of the imperial country and that in the manner of their service there can be no distinction.

## The risings, and what the risers understood

Through 1873 and into 1874 there were risings against the conscription law across western Japan, and they are remembered under the name the admonition gave them: blood-tax risings. The largest was in Hōjō prefecture, in the Mimasaka country of what is now northern Okayama, at the end of May 1873. The immediate trigger, as reported in the local accounts, was the appearance in the villages of men in white robes and the rumour that these were the officials who came to draw the blood; the crowd rose and moved on the prefectural offices at Tsuyama. On the way one column reached the Aizenji and destroyed a monastic training hall, having taken it for one of the new elementary schools.

The government's response was to publish the admonition again in plain language, and local officials wrote their own explanatory pamphlets — one surviving example

from the Hida country patiently explains that a conscript's expenses are paid and that he is not being sent immediately to a war.

It is easy, and wrong, to file this under superstition. Take the rising apart and the misunderstanding is one layer thick and the correct analysis lies directly beneath it. The villagers were not mistaken that the state was taking their sons. They were not mistaken that this was new: under the previous order the farming, artisan and merchant population had owed rice and labour and had owed no military service at all, and the whole of the settlement they had lived under was built on that division. They were not mistaken that the burden fell unevenly, since the men it took were precisely the sons of households without the money for the fee or the connections for the adoption. And the same crowd that destroyed a hall it mistook for a school was also, according to the local record, protesting the school ordinance and the land tax revision — that is, the whole simultaneous arrival of a state that counted, schooled, taxed and levied. That is not a confusion. That is an accurate summary of what had happened to them in eighteen months.

The literal reading of "blood tax" is the part that gets remembered because it makes the risers look foolish. The part that matters is that they were describing the arrangement correctly and losing anyway, which is the ordinary condition of the ruled in every case in this collection.

## Disarming the men who made it

The floor now had to be tested against the only people in Japan who could contest it, and the government proceeded to provoke them.

The sequence of 1876 is compressed to the point of looking deliberate. On the twenty-eighth of March a proclamation forbade the wearing of swords to everyone except men in court dress and soldiers and police on duty. It did not confiscate anything — a sword could still be owned, displayed, collected — but it removed from the street the single visible mark that had distinguished one class of Japanese from all the others, and it did so on an argument Mori Arinori had first put to the deliberative assembly in 1869, that the barbarous custom should be swiftly removed. In August came the conversion of the remaining hereditary stipends into bonds: 313,517 recipients, 174.6 million yen of paper, at rates and terms sorted by size, so that 519 people at the top received an average of 60,528 yen each while 262,317 people at the bottom — five-sixths of the recipients — received an average of 415 yen, yielding about 29 yen a year in interest, against a lower-class household's annual costs of a hundred or more.

On the twenty-fourth of October about a hundred and seventy men of a Kumamoto association called the Keishintō, contemptuously nicknamed the Divine Wind League, attacked the garrison and the prefectural offices with swords. They killed the commander of the garrison and the prefectural governor and several police officers, and the army suppressed them in a day. The risings at Akizuki in Fukuoka and at Hagi in Yamaguchi followed within the week. Two years earlier, in 1874, Etō Shinpei — who had been a councillor of state — had raised Saga and been hanged for it.

Then, from February to September 1877, Satsuma. Saigō Takamori, the senior man of the Restoration, marched with an army of about twelve thousand infantry, two hundred artillerymen and sixty guns. The government put into the field something over fifty thousand regular soldiers, five thousand of the imperial guard, and eighteen thousand police. Both sides together committed on the order of ninety thousand men over seven months, and casualties exceeded thirty thousand. Government dead are put at roughly six to seven thousand, of whom about seventy per cent fell in Kumamoto prefecture; at Tabaruzaka alone, in about a fortnight in March, the government lost some 1,700 dead and over 3,000 wounded, more than a hundred killed a day. Saigō died at Shiroyama on the twenty-fourth of September.

Two things about that campaign belong in this module and not in the eulogies.

The first is that the conscripts held. An army of farmers' second sons, four years old, beat the finest fighting men in Japan, and it did so by means the framework would predict: numbers, artillery, supply, and the fact that it could be replaced and its opponent could not. This is the demonstration that the floor built in 1873 was a real floor, and it is the reason the framework's proposition that unorganised or outnumbered force loses to organised force does not require a caveat here.

The second is that it was close enough in the fighting for the government to improvise. Against Satsuma men in close quarters the conscripts were outmatched with the blade, and the army formed a drawn-sword unit out of police officers who were themselves former samurai, and used it as shock troops. The state that had abolished the warrior caste won its decisive battle partly by hiring some of its members back for the specific thing they were good at. That fact is usually told as a romantic footnote. It should be told as an accounting one: the transition from a caste army to a conscript army was not complete in 1877, and the government knew it, and paid for the gap out of the same class it was destroying.

## When the founding was finished

The framework dates a founding not by the conquest but by the completion of transferability — the point at which the arrangement demonstrates it can survive the

loss of the men who made it. On that test the date is unusually precise, and it is not 1868 and not 1871.

Kido Takayoshi died on the twenty-sixth of May 1877, while the Satsuma campaign was still running. Saigō Takamori died on the twenty-fourth of September 1877, in arms against the government he had made. Ōkubo Toshimichi was cut down in the street at Kioizaka in Tokyo on the fourteenth of May 1878, by former samurai, on his way to the palace.

In fourteen months the three men around whom the entire Restoration had been organised were dead, two of them killed, one of them killed by the state and one killed by its enemies. The government did not fall, did not split, did not pause. The councillors who remained — Itō, Yamagata, Inoue, Ōkuma, Matsukata — carried on, and the institutional history of the following decade shows no discontinuity at that point at all.

That is the answer to the question of when the Meiji settlement became an arrangement rather than an ascendancy. It became one in May 1878, and the proof is that nothing happened.

## Reading the floor against the framework

This collection's account of a founding assumes an apex that holds organised violence and uses it. The case here does not fit that shape at the start, and the way it does not fit is the module's contribution.

**A centre can borrow a floor.** In the summer of 1871 the government of Japan commanded no permanent armed force of its own. It borrowed between six and ten thousand men from three of its subordinate principalities, spent the borrowed force on an act that abolished all three lenders along with two hundred and fifty-seven others, and then used the fiscal proceeds of that act — the whole land revenue of the country, arriving at the centre for the first time — to build a force it owned. The diagnostic that follows is about the interval. Between the concentration of the loaned troops in the sixth month of 1871 and the conscription rescript of the eleventh month of 1872 lies about eighteen months in which the centre's coercive capacity was entirely contingent on the continued willingness of three lenders it had just dispossessed, and that interval is the order's period of maximum exposure. A study meeting a case of this shape should date the interval first and ask what closed it.

And the thing to explain is the lending, not the borrowing. The three domains handed over their best troops to a centre that used them to abolish the domains, which is inexplicable as an act between institutions and perfectly explicable as an act inside a faction: the men who ran Kagoshima, Yamaguchi and Kōchi and the men who ran the

Council of State were largely the same men, in two places, with a shared interest in there being only one place. What looks like a subordinate arming its superior against itself is a single group consolidating its own holdings. The framework should record the pattern under its own name, because it will recur wherever a coalition of provinces produces a centre: **a loaned floor is not a transfer of force between powers but the visible moment at which a faction stops occupying two positions and begins occupying one.**

Two further observations are entered here and left to be developed where they belong.

The dating test worked cleanly, and this is now the collection's sharpest instance of it: an order's founding is complete when its founders die and nothing happens, and here the three principal founders died within fourteen months, two by violence, and nothing happened.

And the conscription law belongs with the tax instruments rather than with the military ones. A levy on bodies that can be discharged for 270 yen is not a nation in arms; it is a charge on households too poor to pay it, laundered through a doctrine of universal duty that the same document states in the most sweeping terms available. Three to four per cent of the eligible actually served. The instrument's stated purpose and its operative effect diverge by an order of magnitude, and the divergence is visible on the face of the statute, in the schedule of exemptions, exactly where this framework has learned to look.

## A note on sources.

The primary texts are quoted exactly and in the original, and the translations are this study's own. The rescript abolishing the domains, of Meiji 4/7/14, is quoted from the text reproduced at Japanese Wikisource, which agrees in every clause with the versions given in the Heibonsha and Shōgakukan encyclopaedia entries reproduced by Kotobank and JapanKnowledge and with a further independent reproduction; the National Archives of Japan holds the edict in its collection of rescripts and its exhibition note supplies the consequence of three urban prefectures and 302 prefectures, consolidated to seventy-two by the eleventh month. The imperial rescript and admonition on conscription of Meiji 5/11/28 are quoted from the Wikisource text of *Chōheirei shōsho oyobi chōhei kokuyu*, checked against the transcription held by the Japan Center for Asian Historical Records at the National Archives, which agrees on every passage quoted here apart from minor orthographic variants and one corrupted stretch in the JACAR text that does not affect the quoted clauses.

The provisions of the conscription law of Meiji 6/1/10 — examination at twenty, lottery, three years in the standing army and four in the reserve, registration of all men from seventeen to forty in the national levy, and the schedule of exemptions covering officials, students at government schools, men training in medicine, household heads and heirs, adopted sons, and payers of the 270-yen substitution fee — are from the National Archives of Japan's exhibition note on the law and from the Ōbunsha and Britannica reference entries reproduced by Kotobank, corroborated for the minimum height of five *shaku* one *sun* and for the 1879 increase of the fee to 400 yen by a Shizuoka prefectural library research paper and the Japanese Wikipedia article on the law. The estimate that only three to four per cent of men reaching twenty were in fact conscripted, and the first-year requisition of 3,272 men with its uneven distribution by prefecture, are from the Japanese Wikipedia article and are given here as the received figures; neither has been traced to the underlying returns and both should be checked before being leaned on further.

The Boshin War casualty figures — 8,420 in all, 3,550 and 4,690 by side, 2,557 for Aizu including 194 women, 514 for Satsuma and 427 for Chōshū, and about 390 at Toba-Fushimi — are drawn from a Japanese compilation of the 1867–77 casualty statistics and from popular reference accounts that reproduce the same series; the compilation itself notes that these are combat deaths and that estimates including deaths from wounds, disease and the execution of prisoners exceed ten thousand, and that range is reported rather than resolved. The Satsuma Rebellion figures are similarly a range: the strengths given here (about 12,000 Satsuma infantry with 200 artillerymen and 60 guns; some 51,800 regular troops, 5,054 imperial guards and 18,000 police on the government side) are from the English Wikipedia infobox; the summary of roughly 90,000 men engaged over seven months with more than 30,000 casualties is from a Japanese public-works historical site; the government dead of roughly 6,000 to 6,700, the concentration of about seventy per cent of them in Kumamoto prefecture, and the Tabaruzaka figures of some 1,700 dead and over 3,000 wounded in about a fortnight are from the same Japanese casualty compilation, cross-checked against a Japan Society summary which gives more than 6,000 deaths and 10,000 injured over eight months. These are consistent in order of magnitude and inconsistent in detail, and no attempt is made here to reconcile them.

On the construction of the central force: the proposal by Yamagata to Saigō in the twelfth month of Meiji 3, the order of the second month of 1871, and the figures of about 6,000 at the organisation and about 10,000 at the concentration completed in the sixth month, are from the Japanese Wikipedia articles on the *goshinpei* and on the history of the Imperial Japanese Army and from the Shōgakukan and Heibonsha

entries reproduced by JapanKnowledge, which also supply the observation that historians differ on whether the force was assembled with the abolition in view. The garrison establishments of 23 April and 20 August 1871, with their headquarters at Ishinomaki, Kokura, Tokyo, Osaka and Sendai, are from the Heibonsha entry reproduced by Kotobank. The conscription regulations of the eleventh month of Meiji 3, the standing-troops establishment law of the twelfth month, the unification of drill on the French model in the tenth month following Yamagata's and Saigō Jūdō's return from Europe, and Tosa's declaration of the principle of the equality of the people on Meiji 3/12/24, are from the Japanese Wikipedia articles on the Japanese military and on the army's history and have not been separately verified.

The account of the surrender of the registers in 1869, including the observation that it passed without disorder partly because the lords expected re-grant, is from the National Archives of Japan's digital exhibition on the emergence of the modern state. The domain debt position, the write-off proportions, the stipend figures and the terms of the 1876 bond issue rest on Ōmori Tōru's study of early Meiji fiscal restructuring for the Bank of Japan's Institute for Monetary and Economic Studies, cited in full in the preceding module; the annual living cost of a lower-class household of about 100 to 120 yen is reported there from Nakamura Satoshi. The remark attributed to Sir Harry Parkes is widely reproduced in Japanese sources, appears here in a form retranslated into Japanese, has not been traced to a contemporary English original, and is accordingly reported as an anecdote and not relied upon.

The sword proclamation is Dajōkan proclamation no. 38 of 28 March 1876, whose formal title concerns the prohibition of wearing swords other than by those in court dress and by soldiers and police officials on duty; the fact that ownership remained lawful, and Mori Arinori's 1869 proposal to the deliberative assembly, are from the Japanese Wikipedia article on the proclamation and from a Japanese sword-culture reference site. The Shinpūren rising of 24 October 1876 — about 170 men of the Keishintō, the killing of the garrison commander, the prefectural official and police officers, and suppression within a day — is from the Japanese Wikipedia article and a reference site; the Akizuki and Hagi risings and the Saga rising of 1874 are given from the standard chronology. The formation and use of the drawn-sword unit from among police officers of samurai origin is from Japanese reference material on the campaign and is reported as the received account. The deaths of Kido on 26 May 1877, Saigō on 24 September 1877, and Ōkubo at Kioizaka on 14 May 1878 are standard chronology; Kido's date is corroborated by the Britannica biographical entry. Sources differ on Ōkubo's year of birth, some giving 1830 and some 1832, and no age is asserted for him here.

The Hōjō prefecture rising of late May 1873, the rumour of men in white robes drawing blood, the destruction of a monastic hall at the Aizenji mistaken for an elementary school, and the connection of the rising to the school ordinance and the land tax revision, are paraphrased from a Chūgoku Shimbun peace-media historical series; the government's issue of a plain-language version of the admonition is from the Yamakawa reference entry, and the surviving local explanatory pamphlet is from the Gifu prefectural archives' commentary. The derivation of *chizei* from the French *impôt du sang* is noted in the Japanese Wikipedia article on the conscription law.

The characterisation of the shogunate's collapse — the failed mobilisation of 1866 and the prior evacuation of the old floor — rests on the preceding study in this series rather than on new research for this module. The argument that a centre can borrow a floor, and that the loan is best read as a faction consolidating from two positions into one, is this study's own and is offered for testing.

# FIVE YEN NINETEEN SEN

*Module 2 · The Settlement — a certificate that made an owner, a stipend that became a bank, an emancipation that came with an instruction to the Ministry of Finance, and a conversion rate that was the real tax*

## Three claimants and no money

By the end of 1871 the government had made itself liable for everything and had acquired the means to pay for nothing. It owed the stipends of some two million people. It owed the debts of two hundred and sixty former principalities. It owed a foreign creditor it could not repudiate. And its revenue was the same rice tax the Tokugawa order had collected, arriving as a share of a harvest whose size varied, in a commodity whose price varied, converted at rates that varied by province, from villages that owed collectively and allocated internally by custom.

The settlement of the first decade is the resolution of that position, and it was carried out as a single operation in two halves, both of them run out of the Ministry of Finance. One half turned the warrior class's claim on the state's revenue into a tradable security. The other turned the cultivator's obligation to the state into a fixed money debt secured on a certificated title. Both were finished in 1876. Between them they determined who in Japan owned what, and the answer has held, in its essentials, for seventy years afterwards.

The framework's question at this stage of a case is who received what in the founding division. This case makes the question harder than usual, because almost nothing was granted to anybody. What happened was that things people already had — a right to a stipend, a right to work a field — were converted into instruments of a different kind, and the conversion decided everything. Nobody was given land. A piece of paper was issued with a name on it.

## The name on the certificate

The preparation began before the domains were abolished and continued without pause. In the ninth month of 1871 the restriction on what a cultivator might plant was lifted, so that cash crops became lawful. In the twelfth month land certificates were issued for urban land in Tokyo. In the second month of 1872 the shogunal prohibition on the permanent sale of fields, in force since 1643, was repealed, and certificates were

issued for land bought or transferred. In the seventh month the issue was extended to private land generally — the certificates known from the cyclical year as the Jinshin certificates.

Then, on the twenty-eighth of the seventh month of Meiji 6 — 28 July 1873 — came Council of State proclamation no. 272. Its preamble is worth quoting because it states the government's own account of what it was doing:

> 朕惟フニ、租税ハ国ノ大事、人民休戚ノ係ル所ナリ。従前其法一ナラス、寛苛軽重率ネ其平ヲ得ス。仍テ之ヲ改正セント欲シ、乃チ所司ノ群議ヲ採リ、地方官ノ衆論ヲ尽シ、更ニ内閣諸臣ト弁論裁定シ、之ヲ公平画一ニ帰セシメ、地租改正法ヲ頒布ス

We consider that taxation is a great matter of state, upon which the ease or distress of the people depends. Hitherto its methods have not been one; lenient or harsh, light or heavy, they have generally failed of evenness. Wishing therefore to reform it, we have taken the collective deliberation of the responsible officers, exhausted the general opinion of the local officials, debated and determined the matter further with the ministers of the cabinet, and brought it to fairness and uniformity, and we promulgate the land tax reform law.

And the operative clause:

> 今般地租改正ニ付、旧来田畑貢納ノ法ハ悉皆相廃シ、更ニ地券調査相済次第、土地ノ代価ニ随ヒ百分ノ三ヲ以テ地租ト可相定旨被仰出候条

On the present reform of the land tax, the former method of tribute payment on fields and dry land is wholly abolished, and upon completion of the survey for the certificates, it is commanded that the land tax shall be fixed, according to the price of the land, at three parts in a hundred.

Four things change in that sentence and the schedule attached to it, and they are usually collapsed into one. The basis of assessment moves from the yield of the land to the capital value of the land. The medium of payment moves from rice to cash. The unit of liability moves from the village to the individual. And the amount moves from a variable share of an actual harvest to a fixed annual sum owed whether the harvest comes or not — the regulations state explicitly that the tax is not to be increased or reduced for good years or bad. To these was added a local levy fixed at one-third of the main tax.

The fifth change is the one that made the settlement, and it is the least legislative-sounding of them: the holder of the certificate is the person liable for the tax. Which

meant, necessarily and by operation of the same clause, that the person liable for the tax was the owner. Japan acquired private property in land not by a grant, not by a doctrine, and not by a court, but by the administrative necessity of writing one name in one box on a form so that somebody could be dunned.

On land the cultivator worked and a creditor or a wealthier neighbour effectively held, the name that went on the certificate was the name of the person who had been meeting the obligation — the landlord. The cultivator's interest, which under the old order had been a real and defensible customary position, was reclassified as a tenancy, and the codification that followed over the next quarter-century made ownership absolute and the tenancy weak: the owner controlled not only the land but the water rights and the improvements, and the tenant's right to go on cultivating had almost no protection at law. The proportion of arable held by someone other than its cultivator ran at roughly thirty per cent at the start of the Meiji period and reached about forty-five per cent by the first decade of the twentieth century.

## What the reform did not do

It did not raise the aggregate tax. This is the fact that most surprises readers who come to the land tax reform through the story of the risings against it, and it needs stating plainly.

The Bank of Japan's reconstruction of the accounts puts the old land tax at about 52.4 million yen with a further 17.4 million in local charges, a total of 69.8 million; and the new land tax at about 49.5 million with 20.1 million local, a total of 69.6 million. At the level of the country the burden was essentially unchanged, and the government had said in terms that this was the objective. The survey that established it was nonetheless enormous: the assessed area of cultivated and residential land came out at 4,849,000 *chō* against 3,260,000 before, an increase of nearly half, because the Tokugawa registers had been comprehensively understated and because land previously exempt — the residential land of the warrior quarters and the townsmen's districts, exempt from ground rent under the old order — was brought onto the roll for the first time. The total assessed value came to about 1,624 million yen, and the number of persons made liable to the tax to about 6.3 million.

So: the same money, from a much wider and more accurately measured base, owed by six million individuals instead of by seventy thousand villages, in cash instead of in rice, in a fixed sum instead of a share.

What changed was not the amount. What changed was who carried the risk.

## Five yen nineteen sen

Under the old arrangement, when the harvest failed the tax fell, because the tax was a share of the harvest, and when the rice price fell the state's receipts fell, because the state received rice. The new arrangement transferred both risks to the household in a single motion. The sum was fixed in money. A bad year did not reduce it. A collapse in the rice price did not reduce it — it raised it, in the only terms that mattered to the man paying, because he had to sell more rice to raise the same yen.

And there was a further instrument, less visible than any of these, which is where the module's title comes from.

A cultivator earns rice and owes yen. Somebody must therefore fix the rate at which his rice becomes yen. In the transitional years, and in the disputes that surrounded the assessment, that rate — the *kokudai* rate — was set by the prefecture. At the end of 1876 the price of rice at Yamada in Mie prefecture was somewhere around three yen fifty sen the *koku*. The conversion rate the prefecture had published was five yen nineteen sen.

That is a statutory tax of three per cent and an administrative surcharge of roughly forty-eight per cent on top of it, imposed by a number in a prefectural notice that no legislature debated, that appears in no proclamation, and that most accounts of the land tax reform do not mention at all.

The cultivators of the Kushida delta, whose fields had been damaged by heavy rain that year, petitioned to be allowed to pay in actual rice, or to pay at the current year's market rate. Their district head did not forward the petition to the prefecture. The prefecture did in fact decide to permit part-payment in rice, and that was not correctly communicated to them either.

On the eighteenth of December 1876, the day collection opened, they assembled and moved on Matsusaka. Villages on the west bank and upriver joined. They attacked the houses of the village headmen and the premises of the Mitsui bank — the house whose ten thousand ryō, drawn from a cellar in Kyoto eight years earlier, had been the new government's first money — and submitted a petition in the name of the whole peasantry of forty-two villages asking for three things: a two-grade reduction in the assessed land values, permission to pay in rice, and abolition of the prefectural tax. Then they dispersed.

That evening the country north of Matsusaka rose, and this time it did not disperse. The rising spread through Ichishi and Anō, then into the four northern districts of Ise where the assessment work was at its most delicate, then across the Kiso and Ibi rivers into Aichi and Gifu, and into Sakai prefecture. The prefecture hastily recruited several thousand shizoku to hold the streets of Tsu. Petitioning turned into breaking and

burning. Police, the hired shizoku levies and garrison troops put it down between the twenty-first and the twenty-third. The number of people subsequently punished was 50,773.

Ōkubo Toshimichi had already decided, during an earlier rising in Ibaraki in November, to offer a reduction, and had withdrawn the idea when that rising was suppressed quickly. After Ise he called the cabinet on the morning of the thirty-first of December, and on the fourth of January 1877 the rate was cut from three per cent to two and a half. Six weeks later Satsuma rose. The government of a country whose revenue was more than four-fifths land tax had just given away over ten million yen and was cutting officials and merging offices to find it.

The reduction was celebrated in a jingle that every Japanese schoolchild still learns — *with bamboo spears they thrust out two* bu *five* rin — though the contemporary newspaper version was milder, the Tokyo Nichi Nichi having them give it only a little poke.

Two details about that half a percentage point belong in the record.

The first is its incidence. Measured against the pre-reform tax, the reduction in the old Mie districts came to about 22.9 per cent and in the old Watarai districts to about 26.3 per cent. But in sixty villages of Kuwana, Asake and Kawawa, where resistance had successfully delayed the reassessment, the reduction was 0.1 per cent. The villages that had fought the survey hardest and won received essentially nothing, because the relief was computed on the new assessment and they did not have one. That is worth sitting with. The most effective resistance produced the least benefit, and it did so through the arithmetic of the relief rather than through any punitive intention, which is the ordinary way such things happen.

The second is what became of the reform's own promises. The ordinance contained an article undertaking that as revenue from commodity taxes rose past two million yen the land tax would be progressively reduced, ultimately to one per cent of land value, and an article added in 1874 freezing the assessed values for five years. In March 1884 the government promulgated a new land tax ordinance which, among other tidying, repealed both articles — the standard Japanese account says the government made the obligations it had legislated for itself into things that had never been. In 1898, to pay for the aftermath of the war with China, the rate went to 3.3 per cent, higher than the figure that had produced the risings.

## What the risers were saying

It is necessary to be exact about this, because the land tax risings are conventionally filed under the same heading as the blood-tax risings — peasant confusion in the face of modernity — and the filing is wrong in both cases.

The forty-two villages did not ask for the abolition of taxation. They did not ask for the restoration of the shogunate. They asked for a reduction in the assessed value, for permission to pay in kind, and for the removal of the prefectural levy. Every one of those is a precisely targeted demand against a specific mechanism, and the middle one goes straight to the instrument that was actually hurting them. They had identified that the medium of payment was the burden — that a fixed money debt on a household earning rice is a different and worse thing than a variable rice debt, and that whoever sets the conversion rate sets the tax.

They were right about all of it. They lost anyway, in the sense that the reform went through and was declared complete in June 1881, and they won half a percentage point, in the sense that the cabinet met on New Year's Eve because of them. Both of those are true and the second should not be inflated into the first.

## The other half of the operation

The warrior class's claim was liquidated in three moves.

In December 1873 the government offered a voluntary scheme: anyone holding a stipend under a hundred *koku* who chose to surrender it would receive, as capital to start a business, six years' worth if the stipend was hereditary and four if it was for life, paid half in cash and half in a new bond. The cash for that came from a loan raised in London that year at seven per cent, issued at 92.5, and secured on four hundred thousand *koku* of land-tax rice. The circle is worth tracing once: the government borrowed from British investors, pledged the rice tax of Japanese cultivators as security, and used the proceeds to buy out the hereditary income of Japanese warriors. All three parties to the Meiji settlement appear in that one transaction, in their proper order of priority.

In September 1875 the stipends still outstanding were converted from rice to money, calculated at each locality's three-year average price — the same conversion instrument, applied to the other class.

Then on the fifth of August 1876, by Council of State proclamation no. 108, the remaining stipends were abolished outright and replaced with bonds. Recipients numbered somewhere between 313,000 and 340,000 depending on the compilation; the total issue was about 174 million yen, close to three times the state's annual

finances. Each holder received between five and fourteen years' worth of his stipend, at interest rates graded by the size of the holding — ten per cent on one preferential marketable class, seven per cent on holdings from ten yen, six from a hundred, five from a thousand. Redemption ran by annual lottery from 1882 and finished in 1906.

The interest schedule is worth pausing on because it looks progressive and was not. Smaller holders did receive higher rates. But the Bank of Japan's reconstruction of the distribution is the fact that matters: 519 people, two-tenths of one per cent of the recipients, received about eighteen per cent of the total, an average of 60,528 yen each; while 262,317 people, five-sixths of the recipients, received about sixty-two per cent, an average of 415 yen each, yielding roughly twenty-nine yen a year against a lower-class household's annual living costs of somewhere around a hundred to a hundred and twenty. A former daimyō could live on the coupon. A former foot soldier could live on it for about three months a year.

And then the detail that turns the stipend commutation from a severance payment into the founding act of Japanese capitalism: the bonds were made eligible as the capital of a national bank. The number of banks founded went vertical. The compensation paid to the warrior class for the extinction of its hereditary income became, in the hands of the few hundred people who had received enough of it to constitute equity, the capital base of the Japanese banking system.

Two months after the commutation came the risings at Kumamoto, Akizuki and Hagi; six months after it, Satsuma. The temptation to draw a straight line is strong and should be resisted; the historian Ochiai Hiroki's caution, which this study accepts, is that the men who rose had been hostile to the government well before the commutation, on grounds they stated themselves — that the country was submitting to the Western powers abroad and that a handful of men were monopolising decision at home. The commutation was the occasion. It was not obviously the cause.

## The register, and the sentence underneath it

One more instrument belongs in the settlement, and it is the one that is hardest to write about honestly.

The status order was reconstructed rather than abolished. At the surrender of the registers in 1869 the court nobility and the former daimyō were merged into a new peerage, the *kazoku*, and the whole retainer class became *shizoku*, with the lower ranks separately classed as *sotsu*. The 1872 census counted 1,282,167 shizoku and 659,074 sotsu. What the phrase *equality of the four estates* actually produced was a register with imperial house, peerage, shizoku, sotsu, shrine officers, clergy and commoners on it — seven categories where there had been four.

At the bottom, on the twenty-eighth day of the eighth month of Meiji 4 — 12 October 1871 — came a proclamation whose public text is a single sentence:

> 穢多非人等ノ稱被廢候條、自今身分職業共平民同様タルヘキ事

The appellations of *eta*, *hinin* and the like being abolished, from this time forward, in status and occupation alike, they shall be as commoners.

That sentence has been the ground of every claim made against caste discrimination in Japan since. It should be recorded first and without qualification.

The instruction circulated to the prefectures the same day carries the same sentence and then continues:

> 一般民籍ニ編入シ身分職業共都テ同一ニ相成候様可取扱。尤地租其外除ケ〔某〕ノ仕来モ有之候ハヽ、引直シ方見込取調、大蔵省へ可伺出事

They shall be entered upon the general population register and treated as wholly identical in status and occupation. Moreover, where there exist customary exemptions from land tax and other charges, the manner of correcting these shall be examined and a recommendation submitted to the Ministry of Finance.

The standard Japanese reference treatment of the proclamation is explicit about the context: the Ministry of Finance's preparation for the land tax reform, the abolition of status categories with a view to creating a national army, and considerations of how the thing looked to foreigners. Court nobles, daimyō, shrines, temples, and various urban and rural residential holdings had all been exempt from ground rent; some outcaste settlements held land under exemptions of their own. A general tax on all land required that there be no categories of person to whom general rules did not apply, and the way to get there was to abolish the categories.

This has to be held in two hands at once, which is what the discipline of this collection is for. The proclamation was real. It was received in some villages as exactly what it said — the record of one temple in Tango notes that the villagers understood it as an imperial declaration that the four estates had equal rights, and that families began taking surnames, some twenty of which date from that moment. It did not create equality: risings against the proclamation followed, from commoners unwilling to lose the people beneath them, and the discrimination it purported to abolish persisted in a form that remains a live political question in Japan. And its administrative twin says, in the same breath, *find out what they were exempt from, and report to the Ministry of Finance.*

Naming that arithmetic is not an accusation of bad faith. It is the same finding this study made about the founding itself: that the balance sheet drove what looks like doctrine. A government that needed a uniform tax base abolished the legal category that stood in the way of one, and in doing so did a thing that was right, for reasons that were fiscal, and the rightness was not diminished by the reasons. What must not be done is to reverse the order and claim the fiscal motive was a pretext for a moral programme, because the surviving paper says otherwise, in the Ministry of Finance's own hand, on the same day.

## Who got what

The ledger of the Meiji settlement, at the close of 1876, reads roughly as follows.

The former daimyō received a peerage, a guaranteed income, a Tokyo residence, and bonds averaging some sixty thousand yen, on which a few hundred families lived as rentiers and investors for two generations. The upper retainers received bonds sufficient to matter. The great mass of the warrior class received about four hundred yen of paper and the legal right to enter any occupation they liked, having been trained for none. Roughly six million cultivators and landholders received a certificate of ownership, which for those who held enough land was the most valuable document any Japanese commoner had ever been handed, and which for those who held too little was a bill fixed in a currency they did not earn. The people who worked land in someone else's name received a tenancy at will. The people at the bottom of the old status order received a sentence abolishing their category and an administrative instruction to assess their land. The merchants who had financed the domains received about a sixth of what they were owed. The London bondholders received seven per cent, secured on the rice.

And the state received, for the first time in Japanese history, a revenue that did not vary with the weather.

## Reading the settlement against the framework

The framework's instrument for reading an extraction system is the medium of payment: a tax demanded in a currency the household does not earn is a labour draft in disguise, because the compulsion has been moved out of the statute and into the household's arithmetic. This case sharpens that instrument by one turn, and the sharpening is the module's contribution.

**Where a state taxes in money a household that earns in kind, the conversion rate is the tax rate.** The statutory rate was three per cent, and it is the number in every

textbook. The prefecture's published conversion of rice into yen, at Yamada at the end of 1876, stood some forty-eight per cent above what rice was actually fetching. No statute names that number. No assembly debated it. It appears in a prefectural notice, is revised by administrative discretion, and moves the burden by a multiple of anything the legislated rate could do. A study reading an extraction system of this kind should therefore look first for the conversion mechanism and only afterwards at the headline percentage — and it should read the demands of those who resisted as the best available guide to where the instrument actually sat. The Kushida cultivators asked to pay in rice. They had found it.

A second observation, entered here and carried forward. **A registration is a distribution.** No land was granted in Meiji Japan. A form was printed with a box for one name, and the state, needing somebody to collect from, wrote in the name of whoever had been paying. Everything that followed — the absolute owner, the defenceless tenant, the rise of tenanted land from about three-tenths of the arable to nearly half, the landlord order that lasted until an occupying army dismantled it in 1947 — followed from an administrative convenience rather than from a policy anyone announced. Where a state converts a customary bundle of overlapping rights into a single legible title, the choice of whose name goes on the document is the settlement, it is generally made for reasons of collection rather than of justice, and its distributive consequences arrive a generation after the officials who made it have stopped thinking about it.

These compound with what the preceding modules established rather than replacing it. The Landscape found that this order's founding transaction was an assumption of liabilities and that the creditor a government chooses to pay identifies the audience whose recognition it thinks it cannot do without. Module 1 found that a centre with no floor of its own borrowed one and then built one. This module finds the same balance sheet driving the third act: the whole settlement, from the certificate to the bond to the sentence abolishing the lowest caste, was executed by one ministry solving one problem, which was that the government had promised more than its revenue could carry and needed a revenue that did not depend on the weather. The doctrine is not absent — the preamble's *fairness and uniformity* was meant, and the emancipation proclamation was meant. But in every case where the doctrinal statement and the administrative instruction survive side by side, the administrative instruction explains the timing and the doctrinal statement does not.

## A note on sources.

The primary texts are quoted exactly and in the original; the translations are this study's own. The preamble and operative clause of Council of State proclamation no. 272 of Meiji 6/7/28 are quoted from a transcription in a Musashino University extension-course document that reproduces the proclamation in full; the National Archives of Japan's exhibition note on the law independently confirms its content — land value as the base, three per cent as the rate, cash rather than rice, no adjustment for good or bad harvests, and the certificate holder as the taxpayer — and the Yamakawa reference entry confirms the seven-article structure of the annexed ordinance, the local levy at one-third of the main tax, the article promising eventual reduction to one per cent once commodity taxes passed two million yen, and the article added in 1874 freezing land values for five years. The emancipation proclamation of Meiji 4/8/28 is quoted from the Wikisource text of the *Hōrei zensho* entry, checked against the transcription published by a Nagasaki human-rights resource site and against the transcription published by Kwansei Gakuin University's human-rights materials collection; the two transcriptions of the accompanying prefectural instruction differ in one damaged character, which is marked here, and agree on the clause concerning tax exemptions and the Ministry of Finance.

The fiscal reconstruction — the old land tax of about 52.4 million yen with 17.4 million in local charges against the new 49.5 million with 20.1 million, the surveyed area of 4,849,000 *chō* against 3,260,000, the total assessed value of about 1,624 million yen, the roughly 6.3 million taxpayers, the terms of the 1873 London loan at seven per cent secured on 400,000 *koku* of land-tax rice, and the whole distribution of the 1876 bonds including the 519 recipients averaging 60,528 yen and the 262,317 averaging 415 — is paraphrased from Ōmori Tōru, "Meiji shoki no zaisei kōzō kaikaku, ruiseki saimu shori to sono eikyō," *Kin'yū Kenkyū* 20:3 (Bank of Japan Institute for Monetary and Economic Studies, 2001), cited in full in the Landscape module, which also reports from Nakamura Satoshi the lower-class household's annual living cost of about 100 to 120 yen.

The sequence of preparatory measures — free cropping in the ninth month of 1871, urban certificates in the twelfth, repeal of the 1643 prohibition on permanent sale in the second month of 1872, and the general Jinshin certificate issue in the seventh — is from the Heibonsha and Shōgakukan entries reproduced by Kotobank and from the Japanese Wikipedia article on the reform, which also supplies the roles of Mutsu Munemitsu and Matsukata Masayoshi in drafting. The National Tax College's historical note confirms that warrior and townsman land formerly exempt from ground rent was brought onto the roll, that the reform was substantially complete by

1881, and that the certificate system was abolished in 1889. The tenancy proportions — roughly thirty per cent at the start of the period rising to about forty-five by around 1900 to 1908 — and the weakness of cultivation rights against absolute ownership are paraphrased from the Shōgakukan and Heibonsha reference entries on landlord–tenant relations and on the parasitic landlord system; these are standard in the Japanese literature and the periodisation varies slightly between compilations.

The Ise rising is paraphrased from the Heibonsha entry reproduced by Kotobank, which supplies the rice price at Yamada of about three yen fifty sen the *koku* against the prefecture's published conversion rate of five yen nineteen sen, the failure of the district head to forward the petition, the three demands submitted in the name of forty-two villages, the attacks on headmen's houses and the Mitsui bank, the recruitment of several thousand shizoku to hold Tsu, and the suppression between the twenty-first and twenty-third of December; and from the Japanese Wikipedia article on the rising, which supplies the figure of 50,773 persons punished, Ōkubo's earlier decision and withdrawal at the time of the Ibaraki rising, the cabinet of 31 December and the reduction of 4 January 1877, the revenue loss of over ten million yen and the consequent retrenchment, the land tax's share of over eighty per cent of revenue, the differential incidence of 22.9 and 26.3 per cent against 0.1 per cent in the sixty villages of Kuwana, Asake and Kawawa, and the note that the familiar form of the jingle does not appear in contemporary newspapers while the Tokyo Nichi Nichi carried a milder version. The Ibaraki rising is separately noted by the Ibaraki prefectural museum's historical dictionary. The 1884 ordinance's repeal of the reduction and freeze articles, and the increase of the rate to 3.3 per cent in 1898, are from the Japanese Wikipedia articles on the land tax and on the reform.

The stipend commutation sequence — the voluntary scheme under proclamation no. 425 of 27 December 1873 with six years' worth for hereditary and four for life stipends paid half in cash and half in bonds, the conversion from rice to money in September 1875, and the compulsory commutation under proclamation no. 108 of 5 August 1876 — is from the National Archives of Japan's chronology and exhibition notes and from the Japanese Wikipedia articles on the two bond issues. The total of ¥173,908,900 and the figure of about 340,000 recipients are from the latter; the Bank of Japan study gives ¥174,638 thousand and 313,517 recipients, and both figures are reported here rather than reconciled. The interest grading of ten, seven, six and five per cent by size of holding, the redemption by annual lottery from 1882 to 1906, and the eligibility of the bonds as national bank capital with the consequent surge in bank foundings are from the same Wikipedia articles and from a Japanese chronological reference site, which also reports the former daimyō stratum taking about eighteen per

cent of the total. That site is the source for the summary of Ochiai Hiroki's position that the rebelling shizoku were hostile to the government before the commutation and that it should not be treated as the principal cause of the risings; Ochiai's argument is paraphrased at second hand and has not been read directly for this module.

The reception of the emancipation proclamation in Tango — the villagers' understanding of it as a declaration of equal rights and the adoption of about twenty surnames, recorded in the perpetual register of the Jōzenji at Zennō village — is paraphrased from a Kōchi prefectural teaching document citing the Kyoto Buraku History Research Institute's 1991 compilation. The Yamakawa reference entry supplies the account of the Finance Ministry's motives and of the notice to the prefectures concerning formerly exempt land; the Shōgakukan entry supplies the risings against the proclamation and the observation that no economic provision accompanied it. The composition of the new status register — imperial house, peerage, shizoku, sotsu, shrine officers, clergy, commoners — is from a Japanese local-history site on the proclamation and is the received account.

The characterisation of the Tokugawa village as a corporate tax unit assessing collectively and allocating by custom rests on the preceding study in this series. The proposition that the conversion rate is the tax rate, and the proposition that a registration is a distribution, are this study's own arguments and are offered for testing.

# THE ONLY AXIS

*Module 3 · The Robe — a state teaching that failed in two years, a morality nobody had to be taught, and a designer explaining in a closed room why the throne would have to do the work that religion does elsewhere*

## What the founding did not ask anyone to believe

Go back through the founding documents of this order and look for the sentence that asks a Japanese person to hold an opinion.

The Restoration decree of January 1868 abolishes offices and founds the new arrangement on the beginning of Jinmu's creation, which is a legal mechanism for reaching past every institution then standing rather than a proposition anyone was invited to affirm. The Charter Oath of April 1868 promises councils and the seeking of knowledge throughout the world, and was read to the assembled nobility and not posted. The notice boards of the following day tell the population that combining is a crime, that petitioning together is a crime, that leaving is a crime, and that informers are paid. The abolition edict of 1871 explains that the government's commands must issue from one source in order that the country may stand against the nations. The conscription admonition of 1872 denounces the samurai and asserts that all subjects alike owe service.

Not one of them asks for belief. They command, they announce, they justify to officials. The order that took power in Japan in 1868 arrived without a robe for its population, and knew it, and set about making one — first by a method that failed completely, and then by a method that worked so well that its success is now the main thing anyone remembers about the period.

The failure is the more instructive half, and it is the half that gets left out.

## The Great Teaching

The Restoration's ideological engine, in the years before it took power, had been the Hirata school of nativist learning, whose programme was the restoration of the unity of rite and rule. Its men were given the machinery. The Council of Divinities was revived as an organ of state and, on the eighth day of the seventh month of Meiji 2, an office of missionaries was created inside it. On the third day of the first month of Meiji 3 — 3 February 1870 — the emperor's name was put to a rescript in classical Chinese:

朕恭惟、天神天祖、立極垂統、列皇相承、継之述之。祭政一致、億兆同心。治教明於上、風俗美於下。而中世以降、時有汚隆、道有顕晦、治教之不洽也久矣。今也、天運循環、百度維新、宜明治教以宣揚惟神大道也。因新命宣教使以布教天下。汝群臣衆庶、其体斯旨。

We reverently consider that the heavenly gods and the imperial ancestors established the throne and handed down the succession, and that the emperors in their line received it, continuing and transmitting it. Rite and rule were one; the myriad people were of one heart; governance and teaching were clear above, and manners were fair below. But from the middle ages onward there have been times of decline and of flourishing, and the Way has been at times manifest and at times obscured; and it is long since governance and teaching have been pervasive. Now the turning of heaven has come round and all things are made new. It is fitting to make governance and teaching clear, and thereby to proclaim the great Way of the gods. We therefore newly command missionaries to preach throughout the realm. You, our ministers and our multitudes, embody this intent.

This is a robe in the fullest sense: a claim about the origin of the order, a claim that the order's authority is continuous with that origin, an account of the intervening centuries as a fall, and an apparatus for teaching it. In March 1870 preaching offices were established in every urban and domain and prefectural administration, and the machinery for a nationwide campaign was in place.

It collapsed almost at once. The standard Japanese reference account gives the reasons without ceremony: there were too few missionaries; the doctrine had never been settled; the prefectural preaching officers were incapable and unenthusiastic; and the Buddhist establishment, which had just been stripped of its fusion with the shrines and in many places physically attacked, resisted. In 1872 the Council of Divinities was abolished and replaced with a Ministry of Religious Instruction, whose corps of doctrinal instructors included Buddhist clergy — that is, the state gave up on a purely nativist teaching body and conscripted the institution it had spent four years dismantling. The Ministry of Religious Instruction was itself abolished in 1877. The office of doctrinal instructor was abolished in 1884.

Fourteen years from the rescript to the disappearance of the last of its apparatus. The state's first attempt to give itself a robe by preaching one was a complete failure, and it is worth being precise about the shape of the failure, because it is the clearest instance in this whole collection of an imported model that did not fit the materials.

The model was a creed with missionaries, propagated to a population which would come to hold it and could be counted as holding it. That is the Christian shape, and more specifically the Protestant shape, and it was the shape most visible to Japanese

observers of the West at exactly that moment — Christianity being simultaneously the thing the government most feared and the only working example of a mass belief-system it could examine. Japan had no tradition of congregational assent to propositions. It had temple registration, which enumerated households without asking them anything; it had shrine observance, which was local, calendrical and territorial rather than doctrinal; and it had a body of household morality that everybody already held and that nobody had ever needed to be converted to. Against that substrate a corps of missionaries preaching the great Way of the gods had nothing to push on. There was no mechanism for a Japanese person to *believe* the Great Teaching in the sense the campaign required, and so nobody did, and the campaign ran out.

## The problem, stated by the man who solved it

Sixteen years later, in a room the public could not enter, the head of the government stated the problem in terms this framework could have written.

On the eighteenth of June 1888, opening the Privy Council's deliberation on the draft constitution, Itō Hirobumi said that before anything else the country's *axis* had to be found and settled; that where there is no axis and politics is left to the people's random argument, government loses its discipline and the state accordingly perishes; that in Europe constitutional government had been germinating for a thousand years and there existed besides a religion which formed the axis, soaking deep into men's hearts and drawing them to one point; that in Japan religion was weak and there was nothing whatever that could serve as the state's axis, Buddhism and Shinto alike lacking the power to draw hearts to themselves; and therefore:

> 我国ニ在テ機軸トスヘキハ独リ皇室アルノミ。是ヲ以テ此憲法草案ニ於テハ専ラ意ヲ此点ニ用ヰ、君権ヲ尊重シテ成ル可ク之ヲ束縛セサランコトヲ勉メタリ

In our country the only thing that can be made the axis is the imperial house, and nothing else. Accordingly, in this draft constitution I have applied my mind specially to this point, and have laboured to hold the sovereign's authority in honour and to bind it as little as may be.

There is no better statement anywhere in this collection of a robe being consciously specified as a component. The head of government tells a closed session that the function is structural, that Europe fills it with religion, that Japan has nothing available to fill it with, that the imperial house will have to be made to do the job, and that the

constitutional text was drafted with that requirement specifically in view. He does not say the emperor is divine. He says the state needs an axis and this is the only candidate.

The framework's proposition that a built order can become the furniture of reality holds that the origin's having been built does not make the resulting belief a lie. Itō's sentence is the moment of building, on the record, in his own words, with the reasoning attached. What followed made it real, and its later reality was not diminished by this. But the sentence exists, and it was not said in public.

The constitution was promulgated on the eleventh of February 1889 — Empire Day, the date assigned to Jinmu's accession — as a grant from the sovereign to the people rather than a compact between them. Its first article vested rule in a line of emperors unbroken through ages eternal; its third declared the emperor sacred and not to be violated.

## The rescript that added nothing

Twenty months later, on the thirtieth of October 1890, came the document that actually did the work. It runs to 315 characters.

> 朕惟フニ我カ皇祖皇宗國ヲ肇ムルコト宏遠ニ徳ヲ樹ツルコト深厚
> ナリ我カ臣民克ク忠ニ克ク孝ニ億兆心ヲ一ニシテ世々厥ノ美ヲ済
> セルハ此レ我カ國體ノ精華ニシテ教育ノ淵源亦實ニ此ニ存ス

We consider that Our imperial ancestors founded the country on a scale vast and far-reaching, and planted virtue deep and thick. That Our subjects have been well able in loyalty and well able in filial duty, that the myriad hearts have been as one, and that age upon age they have achieved this beauty — this is the flower of Our national polity, and here likewise lies the very wellspring of education.

> 爾臣民父母ニ孝ニ兄弟ニ友ニ夫婦相和シ朋友相信シ恭倹己レヲ持
> シ博愛衆ニ及ホシ学ヲ修メ業ヲ習ヒ以テ智能ヲ啓發シ徳器ヲ成就
> シ進テ公益ヲ廣メ世務ヲ開キ常ニ國憲ヲ重シ國法ニ遵ヒ一旦緩急
> アレハ義勇公ニ奉シ以テ天壌無窮ノ皇運ヲ扶翼スヘシ

You, Our subjects: be filial to your parents, affectionate to your brothers and sisters, harmonious as husband and wife, faithful as friends; bear yourselves with modesty and moderation; extend benevolence to all; pursue learning and practise a calling, and thereby develop your faculties and perfect your moral powers; go forward and advance the public good and open up the affairs of the world; always hold the constitution in respect and obey the laws of the state; and should emergency arise, offer yourselves in

righteous courage to the public cause, and thus sustain the imperial fortune, which is coeval with heaven and earth.

> 斯ノ道ハ實ニ我カ皇祖皇宗ノ遺訓ニシテ子孫臣民ノ倶ニ遵守スヘキ所之ヲ古今ニ通シテ謬ラス之ヲ中外ニ施シテ悖ラス

This Way is in truth the bequeathed teaching of Our imperial ancestors, to be observed alike by their descendants and by their subjects; run through the ancient and the modern, it does not err; applied within the country and without, it does not go astray.

Read the middle passage as a list and something odd appears: there is nothing in it that a Japanese person of 1890 did not already hold. Filial piety, fraternal affection, marital harmony, good faith among friends, modesty, benevolence, application to one's studies and one's trade — these are the commonplaces of household morality that the Tokugawa order had been circulating for two centuries, that the notice boards of 1868 had reproduced in their first item, and that no missionary was ever needed to spread. The educational historian Satō Hideo's assessment, which this study accepts and credits, is that the virtues enumerated amount to no more than the ordinary popular morality historically formed among the people of this country, and that what matters is not the list but its structure: that all of it is built towards the clause about sustaining the imperial fortune, so that morality in Japan came to hold meaning only insofar as it contributed to the imperial system.

That is the whole method, and it explains why the second attempt worked when the first had failed. The Great Teaching had tried to install new content. The Rescript installs no content. It takes a morality the population already had, in the exact form it already had it, and appends a terminus. And one item in the middle of the list — *always hold the constitution in respect and obey the laws of the state* — is slipped in among filial piety and marital harmony as though obedience to a two-year-old legal code were a domestic virtue of the same antiquity and the same kind.

The closing clause is addressed elsewhere again. That the Way does not err across all ages and does not go astray applied within the country or without is a universality claim, and universality claims are not made to villagers. It is the answer to the objection a European would raise, made in advance.

## The ordinance that made it happen

A robe that has taken does not need a ministry order specifying how it is to be performed. This one did.

By Ministry of Education ordinance no. 4 of the seventeenth of June 1891, the ceremonies for holidays and festival days in elementary schools were prescribed:

> 第一条 紀元節、天長節、元始祭、神嘗祭及新嘗祭ノ日ニ於テハ、
> 学校長、教員及生徒一同式場ニ参集シテ左ノ儀式ヲ行フヘシ
> 一 学校長、教員及生徒、天皇陛下及皇后陛下ノ御影ニ対シ奉リ最
> 敬礼ヲ行ヒ、且両陛下ノ万歳ヲ奉祝ス
> 但未タ御影ヲ拝戴セサル学校ニ於テハ本文前段ノ式ヲ省ク
> 二 学校長若クハ教員、教育ニ関スル勅語ヲ奉読ス

Article 1. On Empire Day, the Emperor's Birthday, and the festivals of the Origin, of the First Fruits and of the Harvest, the head of the school, the teachers and the pupils shall assemble together in the hall and perform the following ceremonies. First: the head of the school, the teachers and the pupils shall perform the deepest obeisance before the august likeness of His Majesty the Emperor and Her Majesty the Empress, and shall offer felicitation with cheers for their Majesties. Provided that at schools which have not yet received the august likeness, the first part of this article shall be omitted. Second: the head of the school or a teacher shall reverently read aloud the Rescript on Education.

A third clause required an address, based on the Rescript, on the intention of the imperial mind, or on the virtues and achievements of the emperors in their line, or on the origin of the day, so as to cultivate the spirit of loyalty to the sovereign and love of country. A song appropriate to the day was to be sung; *Kimigayo* was not yet in any of the prescribed orders.

Two administrative details in that ordinance are worth more than a page of analysis. The first is the proviso: schools which have not yet received the photograph are excused the bowing. The state legislated the ritual before it had distributed the object of it. The second is what happened next: in 1893, by a further ordinance, the eleven prescribed ceremonial days were cut back to three — Empire Day, the Emperor's Birthday and the first of January — with the rest made optional, on the frank ground that there were simply too many.

Copies of the Rescript and the photographs were kept in a dedicated repository, treated as sacred objects, and in due course died in fires with the heads of schools who went back in for them. In 1891 an instructor at the First Higher Middle School named Uchimura Kanzō did not perform the deepest bow to the copy at a ceremony; the resulting scandal produced an instruction that copies be handled with reverence. That episode is usually told as the first collision between Christianity and the emperor

system in Japan. It is also, read structurally, the moment at which the state discovered that the ritual had a boundary and set about enforcing it.

None of this proves the robe failed. It proves the opposite over time: by the 1930s the thing had taken so thoroughly that it needed no enforcement at all. What it dates is the moment of construction. In 1891 the robe existed as a mandate and not yet as a habit, and the surest indicator of that is that a ministry had to specify, in a numbered article, that people should bow.

## The audience that got a different sentence

There was a third audience, and it received a communication of its own, and the manner of that communication is by now recognisable.

Under the notice boards of 1868 the government had continued the shogunate's prohibition of Christianity, and it enforced it. The hidden Christian community of Urakami near Nagasaki was broken up and deported across the country: 3,394 people exiled, of whom 662 died in the places they were sent, under conditions that the Japanese accounts describe as worse than anything the Tokugawa had done. The foreign ministers reported it and protested repeatedly. When the Iwakura embassy went abroad in 1871 its members were confronted with it by the President of the United States, by Queen Victoria and by the King of Denmark, and were made to understand that a state which imprisoned people for their religion would not be treated as a member of the society of nations, and that treaty revision was not available on those terms.

On the twenty-fourth of February 1873 the boards prohibiting Christianity were taken down and the surviving exiles were ordered released. And here is the sentence, from the standard Japanese account, that this study has now met three times:

To foreign countries the government declared that the prohibition of Christianity was lifted. Domestically it made no declaration that Christianity was permitted.

One administrative act. Two audiences. A statement to one and silence to the other. Not a lie in either direction — the boards did come down, and no announcement of religious liberty was ever made to the Japanese people, and the practical position was toleration without a right, which is exactly what both statements conveyed to their respective recipients.

## Reading the robe against the framework

The framework asks what an order requires its subjects to believe, and treats the cost of maintaining that belief as the measure of how well the order runs. This case bends the question, and the bend is the module's contribution.

**The Meiji state asked its subjects to believe almost nothing new.** The Great Teaching, which did ask for new belief, and which supplied missionaries and a doctrine and a nationwide preaching apparatus to instil it, failed within two years and was wound up within fourteen. What succeeded added no content at all. Every virtue in the Rescript on Education was already held by the people it was addressed to, in the form in which it was addressed to them. What the state did was change what the existing morality terminated in: filial piety was already there, and now it ran up through the father to the throne; obedience to the law was placed on the same list as harmony between husband and wife, so that a legal code two years old acquired the antiquity of the family.

The framework should carry the generalisation, because it is testable elsewhere and it predicts which robes will be cheap. **Where a new order inherits a population with a dense existing morality, the cheap robe is not a new creed but a re-termination of the old one — and the diagnostic is not the content of the founding document but its final clause, since the content will be unremarkable and the terminus is the whole of the innovation.** A study meeting a document of this kind should read the list of virtues as inherited furniture and spend its attention on the sentence the list is pointed at. Here that sentence is *sustain the imperial fortune, which is coeval with heaven and earth*, and it is doing all of the work.

Two further findings, one new and one now confirmed by repetition.

The new one is a dating instrument. **Legislated ritual dates a robe's incompleteness.** In 1891 the state had to specify by ministerial ordinance that pupils would bow to a photograph and that the Rescript would be read aloud on named days — and had to include a proviso for the schools to which it had not yet sent the photograph, and two years later had to reduce eleven mandated ceremonies to three because there were too many. Where observance must be prescribed in a numbered article, the robe is under construction. That it was afterwards worn without prescription at all is the evidence that construction by prescription works, given a generation and a school in every village.

The confirmed one belongs to the study as a whole. This is now the third occasion on which this state has issued two true statements to two audiences and controlled their circulation: the Charter Oath to the assembled lords in classical style and the notice boards to the villagers in phonetic script, one day apart in April 1868; the

emancipation proclamation's public sentence and its administrative twin instructing prefectures to report formerly exempt land to the Ministry of Finance, the same day in October 1871; and the lifting of the Christian prohibition, declared to foreign governments and not declared at home, in February 1873. Three occasions, three different ministries, five years, one method. **An order facing audiences it cannot allow to meet does not generally lie to them. It issues statements that are separately true and manages their circulation** — and the tell is not falsehood but asymmetry of publication: the register the document is written in, the channel it goes out through, and whether anything at all was said to the people who were not being addressed.

The seed of this study asked whether the Meiji robe was cut for the population, for the elite, or for the treaty powers. The answer the sources give is that it was cut three times. The population received a morality it already had, with a new terminus, read aloud in school halls. The treaty powers received a claim of universal validity in the Rescript's closing clause and a statement about religious liberty that was not made domestically. And the elite received, in a closed session of the Privy Council, the design brief: that the state requires an axis, that Europe's is religion, that Japan has none, and that the imperial house is the only candidate. Of the three, the version given to the men who built it is the only one that describes what was being done.

## A note on sources.

The primary texts are quoted exactly and in the original; the translations are this study's own. The rescript on the proclamation of the Great Teaching, of Meiji 3/1/3, is quoted from the classical Chinese text reproduced in the Japanese Wikipedia article and at Weblio, checked against a Japanese reading of the same text with annotation published on a historical chronology blog; the National Archives of Japan holds the original and its chronology confirms the date and character of the document. The Rescript on Education of 30 October 1890 is quoted from the text published by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, checked against the Wikisource transcription and the versions published by the Hokkaido and Miyagi shrine associations, which agree throughout apart from orthographic variants. The 1891 ceremonial ordinance is quoted from the Wikisource transcription of Ministry of Education ordinance no. 4 of 17 June 1891, whose existence and number are confirmed by the National Diet Library's legal index.

Itō Hirobumi's statement to the Privy Council of 18 June 1888 is quoted from a Japanese educational publisher's historical article which reproduces the Privy Council record. This is a single reproduction, and although the passage is among the most

frequently cited in Japanese constitutional history, it has not been checked here against the Privy Council minutes or against Shimizu Shin's edition of the constitutional deliberations, and the wording should be verified before it is leaned on further. The paraphrase in the surrounding sentences — the necessity of finding the country's axis, the consequence of having none, the thousand-year germination of constitutional government in Europe, and the weakness of Buddhism and Shinto as forces drawing hearts to a point — follows the same reproduction. The National Diet Library's exhibition on the constitution supplies the drafting history: the drafts by Inoue Kowashi and Hermann Roesler, the Natsushima draft prepared by Itō with Itō Miyoji and Kaneko Kentarō in 1887, the fair copy of March 1888, and the deliberation in the Privy Council in the emperor's presence. Articles 1 and 3 of the constitution are paraphrased rather than quoted, because their wording was not verified against a primary text in the course of preparing this module.

The failure of the Great Teaching campaign — the insufficiency of missionaries, the unsettled doctrine, the incapacity and passivity of the prefectural preaching officers, the Buddhist resistance, the replacement of the Council of Divinities by the Ministry of Religious Instruction in 1872 with a corps of doctrinal instructors including Buddhists, the abolition of that ministry in 1877 and of the office of doctrinal instructor in 1884 — is paraphrased from the Yamakawa and Shōgakukan reference entries reproduced by Kotobank and Historist, which are in close agreement. The establishment of the missionary office within the Council of Divinities on Meiji 2/7/8, the appointments of Nakayama Tadayasu and Fukuba Bisei, and the extension of preaching offices to the prefectures and domains in March 1870 are from the Japanese Wikipedia article and the Shōgakukan entry.

The apparatus of school observance is from the Heibonsha entry reproduced by Kotobank, which describes the deepest obeisance to the imperial portrait, the cheers, the reading of the Rescript, the head teacher's address and the ceremonial song, and notes the distinctively religious atmosphere of the ceremonies; and from a paper delivered to the Japanese Society for Historical Studies of Education in June 2017 by Komata Noriaki, which supplies the count of eleven prescribed ceremonial days, the differing orders of service for different days, the absence of *Kimigayo* from any of them in 1891, and the 1893 ordinance reducing compulsory observance to the three principal days. The figure of 315 characters, the Uchimura Kanzō episode of 1891 and the resulting instruction on reverent handling, and the keeping of copies and portraits in a dedicated repository, are from the Japanese Wikipedia article on the Rescript and a municipal history compilation; Satō Hideo's reading of the Rescript's structure is quoted at second hand from the Japanese Wikibooks article citing his work, has not

been read directly, and is credited as a paraphrase of his position rather than as this study's own.

The Urakami deportations — 3,394 exiled and 662 dead, the repeated protests of the foreign ministers, the confrontation of the Iwakura embassy by Grant, Victoria and Christian IX, Inoue Kaoru's petitions for pardon in 1872, the removal of the notice boards on 24 February 1873 and the order releasing the exiles on 14 March — are from the Japanese Wikipedia article on the fourth Urakami suppression and from Nagasaki prefectural and diocesan historical material. The statement that the lifting of the prohibition was declared to foreign countries but that no declaration of permission was made domestically is from the Wikipedia article and is the received account in the Japanese literature; it has not been traced here to the underlying diplomatic correspondence and is quoted for its structure rather than relied upon for its detail.

The characterisation of the Tokugawa order's temple registration as an apparatus of enumeration rather than of assent, and of its household morality as a settled inheritance, rests on the preceding study in this series. The separation of shrines and temples in 1868 and the destruction of Buddhist property that followed are noted here without figures, because no reliable count was established in preparing this module. The proposition that a cheap robe is a re-termination rather than a new creed, the proposition that legislated ritual dates a robe's incompleteness, and the proposition that an order facing audiences it cannot let meet issues separately true statements and manages their circulation, are this study's own arguments and are offered for testing.

# UPON THE BRAIN, IN EARLIEST CHILDHOOD

*Module 4 · Formation — an imported schooling that was burned down, a temple that became a schoolhouse with the same master in it, and a court adviser explaining in 1879 exactly why the work must be done on children*

## There is no unformed person

Formation, in this framework, is not propaganda and not schooling in the ordinary sense. It is the installation, early, of the apparatus through which a person will afterwards see everything: who his natural superiors are, whose word settles a question, which sources are to be trusted without checking, what the cast of the world is and where he stands in it. It works because the human mind is obligately social — because nobody can verify more than a sliver of what he knows and must therefore take the rest from authorities whose marks he reads rather than whose claims he tests — and it works most durably when it is installed before the screening machinery that would filter it has matured, and then buried under a life built on top of it.

Which means there is no null option. A person the state declines to form is not left neutral; he is formed by whatever else is running. This is what the study of British Kenya in this collection found in its starkest shape: a colonial government that withheld formation from the great majority, on the sound reasoning that forming Kenyans as Englishmen would oblige it to admit them as Englishmen, and educated instead a thin stratum of clerks — with the result that the formation already in place simply held the field, and the population the state refused to form was formed anyway, by other hands, into something the state eventually had to deal with.

Japan is the inverse case, and that is what makes it worth putting beside Kenya. Here there was no foreign government with an incentive to withhold. The men who took power in 1868 were natives of the order they were replacing, formed by it themselves, and they set out to form the entire population deliberately, universally and fast. What they discovered in the process is the subject of this module, and it is not what they expected.

## What was already running

The formation the Meiji men found in place was not a thin thing and it was not new. It was the settled residue of an earlier taking, so completely naturalised by 1868 that nobody inside it experienced it as anything but the shape of the world.

It taught a person, from before he could weigh it, that the household head decided, that the village headman spoke for the village and negotiated with the authorities on its behalf, that above the headman stood officers of the domain and above them the lord, and that these were not arrangements but facts of the same order as the seasons. It taught that one's place was one's place — that a farmer's son farmed, that occupation and status were the same word, and that the register kept at the temple recorded what one was. It supplied the morality: filial piety before everything, order among brothers, harmony in the household, faithfulness among friends, modesty, diligence. It supplied the calendar and the observances. And it supplied a working answer to the question of whom to believe, which is the load-bearing one — the elder, the headman, the priest, the master of the writing school.

It also supplied literacy, on a scale that matters enormously to what follows. By the close of the Tokugawa period the writing schools — the *terakoya* — had spread across the whole country and numbered in the tens of thousands. The Ministry of Education's own official history says so, and says why it matters, in a sentence that concedes the whole of this module's argument in advance: that the most important reason the elementary school system could be put together so quickly was the long history of learning in Japan, and particularly the marked development of schooling in the early modern period, which formed the ground it was built on.

None of this was fake and none of its holders were dupes. It was a former conquest's formation that had fully taken, which is to say it had become genuinely the world its holders lived in — and that is precisely what made it durable, and precisely what the new state was about to run into.

## Learning is the capital for making your way

On the second day of the eighth month of Meiji 5 — 4 September 1872 — Council of State proclamation no. 214 promulgated the Education System, in 109 chapters, together with a preamble that has been known ever since as the school ordinance's foreword.

The design was breathtaking on paper. The country was divided into eight university districts, each into thirty-two middle districts, each of those into two hundred and ten elementary districts, with a school in every one: 53,760 elementary

schools, for a population of some thirty-three million. The district structure was taken from France. The content owed most to the United States. No budget had been agreed with the Ministry of Finance when the thing was promulgated.

The preamble's argument was not the argument of any Japanese document that had come before it. It opened by asserting that the means by which people establish themselves, manage their property, prosper in their business and thereby complete their lives is learning; that

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learning is the capital by which a man makes his standing;

and that a person's ruin is usually traceable to his not having learned. It rejected the received view that learning was for people of rank. And it stated the objective:

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We look for this: that there shall be, in the village, no household without learning, and, in the household, no person without learning.

Read that against the notice boards of 1868 and the distance is astonishing. Four years after telling the villages that combining was a crime, the state was telling them that every single person in every single house would be schooled.

But look at what the document actually asks a Japanese family to believe, because the Ministry of Education's own official history is unusually candid about it. The view of learning set out in the preamble, that history says, is plainly different from the one grounded in the received Confucian thought, and stands in a position of criticising and excluding it; it is founded on modern European ideas, and it is individualist and utilitarian. Learning is for *your own* advancement. Its purpose is *your* standing, *your* property, *your* trade. And — the fourth plank, and the one that did the damage — the costs are to be borne by the person benefiting, the previous reliance on official funds being named as an old abuse to be discarded.

To a farming household in 1873 this proposition read as follows: pay a fee you do not have, to send a child you need in the fields, for eight years, to be taught things that will not help with the harvest, on the argument that he as an individual may thereby rise out of the household whose labour you are being asked to give up. Every part of that runs against the formation actually installed in the people receiving it, in which the household is the unit, the child's labour is the household's, and rising out of one's station is not an aspiration but a category error.

They burned the schools. The risings of 1873 that this study met in Module 1 under the name of the blood-tax risings were not only about conscription; the crowd at

Tsuyama that destroyed a hall it had mistaken for one of the new elementary schools was making a set of connected objections to conscription, to the land tax revision and to the school ordinance together, and across western Japan new schools were among the things attacked. Enrolment in 1875 stood at about 35 per cent.

The Education System was abolished on the twenty-ninth of September 1879.

That is the second time in four years that this study has watched the same thing happen. The Great Teaching of 1870 imported the shape of a creed with missionaries and failed within two years. The Education System of 1872 imported the shape of an individualist, fee-paying, self-advancement schooling and failed within seven. Both were straight transfers of a foreign model onto a substrate that gave them nothing to hold on to.

## Where the schools actually came from

And yet by 1905 nearly every Japanese child was in school. The explanation is not in the ordinance. It is in what the prefectures actually did with it, and it is the most important administrative fact in this module.

The Ministry of Education's official history sets out the three approaches taken. Some prefectures abolished the existing writing schools and private academies outright and established new schools. Some let the old ones stand and built public elementary schools alongside, planning to absorb the pupils gradually. And some amalgamated the existing writing schools and academies under the new district scheme and simply re-formed them as elementary schools. The third was much the commonest, and the history records that in some prefectures every existing writing school and academy was converted, there and then, into an elementary school of the new system — several of them gathered into one school, the writing master appointed as the schoolteacher, and the pupils becoming, on the same day and in the same room, elementary school pupils.

The buildings tell the same story. In 1875, about forty per cent of elementary schools in Japan were in borrowed temple premises and about thirty per cent in borrowed private houses: roughly seven in ten housed in something that had been there before.

So the national school system of Meiji Japan was, in its first decade and in most of the country, the Tokugawa writing-school network with a new name over the door, in the same building, with the same man at the front of the room, teaching many of the same children. The state did not construct a formation apparatus. It annexed one.

This is why the failure of the 1872 ordinance was survivable and the failure of the Great Teaching was not. The Great Teaching had no existing apparatus to fall back into; when the preaching failed there was nothing underneath. The school system fell

back into the writing schools, which were already running, and which went on running under a new legal description while the state worked out what it actually wanted them to do.

## Upon the brain

What it wanted was settled in 1879, by a man whose position in the machinery of this state is easy to miss.

In the summer and autumn of 1878 the emperor made a progress through the Tōsandō, Hokuriku and Tōkai regions, and among other things inspected elementary, middle and normal schools, in some detail. He came back disturbed by what he had seen. In the summer of 1879 he had his Confucian lecturer, Motoda Nagazane — the man who read him the Analects, and who would later be among the drafters of the Rescript on Education — write out a statement of the essentials of teaching, and it was shown to the Home Minister, Itō Hirobumi, and to the Minister of Education.

It opens:

> 教学ノ要、仁義忠孝ヲ明カニシテ、智識才芸ヲ究メ、以テ人道ヲ尽スハ、我祖訓国典ノ大旨、上下一般ノ教トスル所ナリ。然ルニ輓近専ラ智識才芸ノミヲ尚トビ、文明開化ノ末ニ馳セ、品行ヲ破リ、風俗ヲ傷フ者少ナカラズ

The essential of teaching and learning is to make clear benevolence, righteousness, loyalty and filial piety, and thereafter to exhaust knowledge and the arts, and so to fulfil the Way of man: this is the great purport of our ancestral instruction and our national canon, and what high and low alike take as their teaching. Yet of late men have esteemed knowledge and the arts alone, have raced after the tail-end of civilisation and enlightenment, have broken their conduct and injured the customs, and such men are not few.

And it goes on to locate the cause: that at the beginning of the Restoration the breaking of the old evil customs and the seeking of knowledge throughout the world were made the first business. Those are the fourth and fifth articles of the Charter Oath. The document is naming the founding promise of the regime as the origin of the damage.

Then, in the section on elementary schooling, it proposes the method. The virtues of benevolence, righteousness, loyalty and filial piety are to be conveyed by images and photographs of loyal ministers, righteous men, filial sons and chaste women, so as —

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to make them felt upon the brain-matter at the very beginning of childhood.

There is no need to gloss that. A senior officer of a modern state, in an official document of 1879, states the timing lever of the exploit in one clause, correctly, and recommends it. Not that children are easier to argue with — that they are not yet able to refuse, and that what is laid down before refusal is possible will be defended in adulthood as the ground of the self.

Itō opposed it. His reply, submitted in September 1879, argued that the rapid introduction of European and American science and technology was a necessity; that the establishment of a national teaching was a matter to be left to sages; and that the government ought not to intervene in morality. Motoda answered him from the position that rite and rule are one. The statement went out anyway.

That exchange is worth holding against a later one. Nine years afterwards, opening the Privy Council's debate on the constitution, the same Itō would tell a closed session that a state must have an axis, that Europe's is religion, that Japan has none available, and that the imperial house is therefore the only candidate. The two positions are opposite and both are his. Read from position rather than from conviction, they are not a contradiction: in 1879 Itō was Home Minister confronting a popular rights movement and needed the government's authority to rest on competence rather than on a doctrine that reactionaries at court would own; in 1888 he was drafting a constitution and needed a load-bearing member, and there was only one on the site. What changed was not the man's philosophy. It was what his position required him to find.

The rest followed. In 1880 the revised education order moved moral instruction to the head of the elementary curriculum. In December 1882 the Imperial Household Ministry distributed to schools throughout the country, through the prefectural governors, an *Essentials of Learning for the Young* compiled under Motoda around twenty virtues, taking loyalty and filial piety as the root and putting benevolence and righteousness first. In 1890 came the Rescript on Education, in 1891 the ordinance requiring it to be read aloud and bowed to, and in 1903 the state took over the writing of the textbooks.

## What a good Japanese was

Set the two formations side by side and the change is not where one would look for it.

The list of virtues barely moves. Filial piety, fraternal order, harmony between husband and wife, good faith among friends, modesty, diligence — these are on the Tokugawa notice boards of 1868, in Motoda's document of 1879, in the Rescript of

1890, and in the moral-instruction textbooks after 1903. A person could pass through the whole transition without being asked to hold a single new opinion about how to behave.

What changed is the map of authority, and that is the whole of it.

Under the old formation, deference ran upward in several short ladders that terminated locally. A person owed obedience to the head of his household, and the household owed the village, and the village dealt with the domain's officers, and the lord owed the shogun — and the emperor, at the far end of a chain most people had no occasion to think about, was not in the ordinary Japanese person's working cast of authorities at all. He was not seen. He had no relation to the harvest, the tax, the register or the road. The standard account holds that he was largely unknown to the population before the Restoration, which is why the new government sent him on six great progresses around the country between 1872 and 1885, and why the school ordinance of 1891 had to make provision for schools that had not yet been sent his photograph.

Under the new formation there is one ladder and it reaches from the kitchen to the throne. The child is filial to his father exactly as before; the father defers to the schoolmaster and the headman as before; but the schoolmaster is now a state officer, reading out on named days a document in the emperor's voice, in front of the emperor's photograph, which instructs the child that the same filial piety he owes at home is the thing that sustains the imperial fortune. And there is nowhere else the ladder goes. The domain is abolished, the lord is in Tokyo on a pension, the temple's register has been superseded by the state's, and the priest whose word once ended arguments has watched his institution stripped and attacked.

That is the answer to the question of what a good Japanese was made into. Not a person holding new beliefs. A person whose old beliefs had one destination where they had formerly had several — loyal to the sovereign and loving of his country, in the phrase the 1891 ordinance instructed head teachers to cultivate, with the loyalty built out of materials every household already had in it. And the exemplars held up to him tell you exactly what the destination expected: loyal ministers, righteous men, filial sons, and chaste women, which is a list sorted by sex before it is sorted by anything else.

## Whether it took

It took, and the figures should be given honestly, including the parts that complicate the story.

Enrolment stood at about 35 per cent in 1875. It then went *down*: the Ministry's own history records 45 per cent in 1887 — 60 per cent of boys and 28 per cent of girls

— as the low point, driven by the deflation of the mid-eighties and by the 1886 elementary school ordinance's decision to fund schools out of fees. In 1895 it was about 61 per cent (77 and 44). By 1905 it was about 96 per cent (98 and 93). By the middle of the following decade it was effectively universal.

Three things about that curve.

The first is that the state's own explanation for the rise is not doctrinal. The Ministry's history attributes it to the improvement in living standards that followed the war with China, to a deepened public recognition of national education, to the establishment of national subsidy for compulsory education, and — decisively — to the 1900 ordinance which defined the obligation to attend strictly and abolished fees in principle. What moved the numbers from sixty per cent to ninety-six was a war, a subsidy and the removal of the charge. The Rescript on Education had been read aloud in schools for a decade by then, and enrolment during that decade had been in the sixties.

The second is the gap between being enrolled and being present. In 1902 enrolment passed ninety per cent for the first time, at 91.6 — and the actual attendance rate that year was 68.4. Nearly a quarter of the children on the books were not in the room. A formation system is measured by hours in the seat, not by names on a register, and the register overstated it for years.

The third is the gender gap, which is the most striking single movement in the series: thirty-two points in 1887, five points in 1905. Whatever else the Meiji school did, it brought girls inside the formation apparatus within twenty years, and taught them, among other things, that the model woman was the chaste one.

## Reading formation against the framework

The Kenya case in this collection established what happens when a conquering state withholds formation: the incumbent formation holds the field, because there is no unformed condition for a person to be left in, and the population the state declined to form arrives later as a problem it did not shape. Japan supplies the mirror, and two findings come out of the comparison.

**The first is that a dense incumbent formation is not only an obstacle. It is the cheapest available apparatus, and the intelligent move is to annex it rather than replace it.** The Meiji state tried replacement first, in 1872, with an imported ordinance whose preamble was individualist where the population was corporate, fee-charging where the households had no cash, and explicitly hostile to the Confucian frame that was the only frame most of its readers had. That attempt produced burned schools and thirty-five per cent enrolment and was repealed in seven years. What actually built the

national school system was the quiet decision, taken prefecture by prefecture rather than announced in Tokyo, to amalgamate the existing writing schools under the new districts, appoint the old writing masters as the new teachers, and hold the classes in the temples: seven in ten schools in borrowed premises in 1875, and in many places the same room, the same master and the same children on the day after the change as on the day before.

The diagnostic follows directly, and it is a cheap one to apply. **To tell whether a state has built a formation system or annexed one, look at who is standing at the front of the classroom in year three, and at what the building was used for in year zero.** Where the teacher is the incumbent order's teacher and the school is the incumbent order's temple, the formation running is still the old one with a new authority at the top — which is not a failure of the new state's programme but very often the successful execution of it, and much the cheaper of the two routes.

**The second is that formation's real product is the cast, not the creed, and that a formation system can be completely rebuilt without changing a word of what it teaches.** Nothing on the Meiji list of virtues was new. A Japanese person crossing from 1867 to 1905 was never once asked to hold a moral opinion he had not held before. What was rebuilt was the map of authority that the virtues discharged into: several short local ladders, terminating in the household head and the headman and the lord, were collapsed into a single national one terminating in a figure who had not previously been in most people's working cast at all — and the institutions that had carried the old map, the domain, the temple register, the headman's office, were dismantled or absorbed in the same twenty years.

The framework should therefore carry the instrument in this form. **The question to ask of a formation system is not what it teaches but whom it authorises: who is a natural superior, whose word ends an argument, which sources are believed without checking.** Read only the doctrinal content and the Meiji transformation is nearly invisible, because the content is continuous. Read the cast and it is total.

This compounds directly with what Module 3 found about the robe, and the convergence is now the study's spine. In both cases an imported model — a creed with missionaries, an individualist utilitarian schooling — was tried first and failed within a few years against a substrate that gave it nothing to grip. In both cases what succeeded added no content, took the inherited material intact, and changed only where it pointed. The government stated the method itself, in the conscription rescript of 1872: founding upon the system of our own country in ancient times, and weighing the forms of the various nations overseas.

Two things are entered here and left for later modules to price. The formation worked, and it should be credited as work rather than dismissed as trickery: it delivered literacy and numeracy to the whole population inside forty years, it brought girls from twenty-eight per cent to ninety-three, and much of what it gave people was of real use to them. And it produced, by design and with unusual completeness, exactly the condition this framework's account of the exploit identifies as the dangerous one — a single ladder of authority with one terminus, no rival interpreter left standing, and no other collar in the room. What that costs when the terminus makes a mistake is a question for the modules on foreclosure and on collapse.

## A note on sources.

The primary texts are quoted exactly and in the original; the translations are this study's own. The preamble to the Education System of Meiji 5/8/2 is quoted in fragments from a 2021 paper by Kimoto Takeshi in the *Bulletin of the Faculty of Education, Wakayama Shin'ai University*, which reproduces the passages given here; the National Institute for Educational Policy Research's rare-books collection and the National Archives of Japan both hold the document and confirm its date, its promulgation as Council of State proclamation no. 214 alongside the Education System proper, and its character as a statement of the purpose of establishing schools. The chapter structure — 109 chapters under six heads — and the district arithmetic producing 53,760 elementary schools are from the text of the Education System published by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and from the Japanese Wikipedia article; the French model for the district scheme and the American influence on content are from the National Institute for Educational Policy Research's commentary.

The passages from the 1879 statement on teaching and learning are quoted from a 2009 paper in the *Bulletin of Toyama University of International Studies* by Fukushima, which reproduces the opening of the general section; the phrase concerning images of loyal ministers, righteous men, filial sons and chaste women and the impression upon the brain-matter in earliest childhood is quoted from the Heibonsha encyclopaedia entry by Yamazumi Masami reproduced at Kotobank, which also supplies Itō's objection — that European and American science and technology must be rapidly introduced, that the founding of a national teaching should be left to sages, and that the government should not intervene in morality — and Motoda's rejoinder from the position that rite and rule are one. Both quotations rest on single reproductions and should be checked against the text in the collected imperial documents before being leaned on further. The document's authorship by Motoda

Nagazane, its structure in a general section and two articles on elementary schooling, its status as the first imperial intervention in public education, and the resulting policy dispute with Itō are from the Yamakawa entry reproduced at Historist, the Japanese Wikipedia article, and a National Diet Library Research and Legislative Reference Bureau paper, which also supplies Motoda's role as the emperor's Confucian lecturer and later as a drafter of the Rescript on Education.

The Ministry of Education's own official history — *Gakusei hyakunenshi*, published on the ministry's website — is the source for several of the module's load-bearing claims and is paraphrased throughout: the characterisation of the 1872 preamble's educational philosophy as differing from and standing in a position of criticising and excluding received Confucian thought, and as individualist and practical-learning in the modern European manner; the statement that the most important reason the school system could be built so quickly was the long prior history of Japanese schooling and particularly the early modern development of the writing schools, which by the end of the Tokugawa period numbered in the tens of thousands; the three prefectural approaches to founding schools, with the amalgamation of existing writing schools as the commonest, including the appointment of writing masters as schoolteachers and the direct conversion of pupils; the figures of about forty per cent of elementary schools in borrowed temple premises and about thirty per cent in borrowed private houses in 1875; the emperor's progress of 1878 and his inspection of schools; the compilation and December 1882 distribution of the *Essentials of Learning for the Young*, with its roughly twenty virtues taking loyalty and filial piety as the root; and the full enrolment series, including 45 per cent in 1887 with 60 and 28 by sex, about 61 per cent in 1895 with 77 and 44, about 96 per cent in 1905 with 98 and 93, together with the ministry's own explanation of the rise in terms of post-war living standards, national subsidy, and the 1900 ordinance's strict definition of the attendance obligation and abolition of fees.

The 1875 enrolment figure of 35.43 per cent is cited from the *Dictionary of Japanese Modern Educational History* at second hand through a Japanese educational blog and has not been verified directly. The 1902 figures — enrolment of 91.6 per cent against an actual attendance rate of 68.4 — are from a chronology of modern childhood cited in a National Diet Library collaborative reference entry, likewise at second hand. The abolition of the Education System on 29 September 1879 by the Education Order, the 1880 revision moving moral instruction to the head of the curriculum, and the adoption of state-authored textbooks in 1903 are standard chronology. The attacks on new schools during the risings of 1873 are treated here as part of the same movement

documented in Module 1 and rest on the sources cited there; no separate national count of schools destroyed was established for this module, and none is asserted.

The claim that the emperor was not in most Japanese people's working cast of authorities before the Restoration is the received account in the Japanese and English literature rather than a finding of this study, and the six imperial progresses of 1872 to 1885 are cited in support of it; readers should treat the strength of the claim as a matter on which historians differ. The account of the Tokugawa formation — the household, the village headman, the temple register, status as occupation, and the writing schools — rests on the preceding study in this series. The theoretical account of formation in the opening section, including the timing lever, the cast of trusted authorities, and the proposition that there is no unformed condition, is drawn from *The Exploit* and *Position Logic* in this collection and is not original here. The propositions that a dense incumbent formation is best annexed rather than replaced, that the diagnostic is the identity of the teacher and the prior use of the building, and that a formation system's product is the cast rather than the creed, are this study's own arguments and are offered for testing.

# TWENTY-EIGHT THOUSAND FOR SIX HUNDRED PLACES

*Module 5 · The Cost Column — what compliance bought the ordinary Japanese, what refusal cost him, whether he could leave, and why the one thing never permitted in thirty-two years was to combine*

## The question, put properly

The framework's question here is not about the hierarchy. It is about the person at the bottom of it, and it is a question of arithmetic rather than of morals: why does he comply?

Four things go into the answer. What does compliance buy him — is there a benefit, and is it real? What does refusal cost him — how hard, how certain, how quick? Does he believe the arrangement is right, so that compliance is not a calculation at all? And can he leave — is there another arrangement within reach, and does the order have to bid to keep him? Where the benefit is thin and the belief has not taken, the state must supply the difference in cost, which is expensive; where the benefit is real and the belief has taken, the order runs on very little force.

And there is no single common man. The Meiji settlement of 1873 to 1876 sorted the Japanese population into positions that differed from one another far more than any of them differed from a Tokugawa villager: the farmer with a certificate and enough land, the farmer with a certificate and not enough, the tenant with no certificate at all, the second son in the filature, the emigrant, the Okinawan islander paying a tax abolished on the mainland thirty years earlier. Each of these people faced a different column, and they behaved differently, and the differences are legible.

## What the arrangement actually gave

Begin with the benefit, and give it fully, because a study that treats the Meiji state as pure extraction will not be able to explain why it was obeyed.

An ordinary Japanese in 1890 could go where he liked. The permit system that had made travel outside one's own domain a matter of official application had gone; the fifth notice board of 1868 forbidding warriors and commoners to quit their home provinces was withdrawn in November 1871. He could work at whatever he could get.

He could plant what he judged best rather than what the register said. He had a surname. He could be a party to a lawsuit. He could not be cut down in the road by a man of a superior class without the killer answering for it, which had not been reliably true before.

If he held land, he held a certificate that said so, and it was the most valuable piece of paper any Japanese commoner had ever been handed — transferable, mortgageable, and secure against everything except his own inability to pay the tax. If he had a bright son, that son could go to school, and after 1900 without a fee, and out of the school there ran a ladder — normal school, middle school, the army's officer track, the ministries' examinations — that reached higher than anything the Tokugawa order had offered a farmer's child. The ladder was narrow and most people never climbed it, but it existed, and its existence was visible in every village because the schoolmaster had climbed part of it.

By 1905 nearly every child in Japan was in a classroom, girls at ninety-three per cent and boys at ninety-eight, and the country had a literate population, a national currency, a rail network, a postal system, courts that functioned, and — after 1899 — no foreign consular courts sitting on its soil. These are real goods and many of them reached down to the bottom.

## What it cost

Now the other column, and it has to be set out in the same concrete terms.

The tax was fixed in money and did not fall when the harvest did. That is the finding of Module 2 and it is the hinge of everything in this one, because it converts every downturn in the price of what a household sells into an increase in the real burden of what it owes. The conscription law took the sons of households too poor to pay the 270-yen exemption and too small to arrange an adoption. The school ordinance charged fees.

And then, from October 1881, Matsukata Masayoshi became Finance Minister and set about retiring the paper money. What that policy did to the countryside is the single largest fact in this module. The price of rice fell and the price of raw silk fell — and the tax did not. Simultaneously the government raised various taxes, created new ones, and transferred central expenditure onto local budgets: prefectural building and prison costs moved to local tax funding, and the national subsidies for prefectural public works and for district, town and village education were abolished outright. So the villages were required to fund their own schools out of local rates in the middle of a deflation, and the local rates rose, with the household levy rising fastest.

The result is documented plainly in the Japanese reference literature. Land and property were put up for auction for tax arrears. From 1883 the number of landholders and farmers losing their land rose sharply. Those who could not repay moneylenders were bankrupted, and the number so ruined ran to the tens of thousands. Land accumulated in the hands of landlords and usurers, and the proportion of arable worked by someone other than its owner climbed from roughly three in ten towards nearly half. Households that could no longer hold on sold their land and went to the cities as wage labour, or stayed and became tenants of the neighbour who had bought them out.

That is what the certificate meant to the person who could not meet the payment: it made him a debtor with a security to seize, where the old arrangement had made him a member of a village that owed collectively and negotiated when the harvest failed.

## Three years' closure of the schools

The district of Chichibu, in the mountains west of Tokyo, lived on sericulture and raw silk, and was therefore hit as hard by the deflation as anywhere in Japan. From late 1883 the indebted farmers of Chichibu, Kodama and Ōsato organised — with radical members of the Liberal Party at the core — into what they called the Poor People's Party, and began asking for time.

They asked lawfully first. They petitioned their creditors. They petitioned the district office. Both refused. Through 1884 the movement grew in size and in bitterness, and in October the preparations turned to arms. The rising began a day early, on the thirty-first of October, when a body of farmers collided with police, and for a fortnight the Poor People's Army held most of Chichibu. The government sent police, then the army, then the gendarmerie, and by the middle of November it was finished.

Their demands are the reason this rising belongs in a module on the cost column rather than in one on collapse. They asked for their debts to be rescheduled over instalments. They asked for the abolition of the miscellaneous local taxes. And they asked for the schools to be closed for three years.

Read that third demand against Module 4. The state had built a formation apparatus of a kind this collection rarely sees, universal in intention and eventually universal in fact, and had then — in the worst agricultural years of the century — pushed the cost of running it down onto the villages. To the household in Chichibu in 1884 the elementary school was a rate it could not pay and a pair of hands it could not spare, and the rational request was to shut it for three years until the debt was cleared.

The people being formed were pricing their own formation, and at that moment they valued it below the cost of the fee.

## Twenty-eight thousand

Now the exit variable, which in this case behaves in a way the framework should note carefully.

In 1884 — the year of Chichibu, in the same deflation — the government opened public applications for six hundred places on a labour contract to the sugar plantations of Hawaii. Three years of cane-cutting in the Pacific, under an agreement between two governments.

Twenty-eight thousand people applied.

Nine hundred and forty-odd sailed on the *City of Tokio* in January 1885 — the standard breakdown gives 682 adult men, 164 adult women and 98 children. Under the government-contract scheme, which ran until 1894, 29,132 people went. When it lapsed, private emigration companies took over and the flow continued and grew: to the American mainland at over twenty thousand a year in some years around the turn of the century, to Canada, to the pearl-shell beds of the Torres Strait from 1883, to Mexico in 1897, to Peru in 1899, and from June 1908 to Brazil, where some hundred and ninety thousand Japanese had gone by 1941.

A forty-seven-fold oversubscription is a measurement. It is the clearest single number in this study of what the Meiji arrangement was worth to the people living in it at the bottom, in a bad year, expressed not in opinion but in the willingness to sign an indenture and cross an ocean.

And yet the exit did not act as a check on the government, and the reason is the second half of the story.

The emigrants sent money home. Wakayama prefecture, which sent people to Hawaii, to the salmon fishery of British Columbia, to the Australian shell beds and later to Brazil, was first in Japan for emigrant remittances until the end of the Taishō period, and the prefecture's own account of it is specific about where the money went: to families and relatives, of course, and also to the schools, the temples and the shrines of the home villages. That is to say, the money paid the very local burdens that Matsukata's transfer of costs had loaded onto the villages in the first place.

So the state's position on emigration was not reluctant tolerance. It refused the early requests, then licensed the traffic from 1884, then concluded intergovernmental conventions to regulate it, and eventually treated overseas settlement as a measure of population adjustment. It had worked out that a poor second son was worth more abroad than at home: outside, he was not competing for land, not available to join a

Poor People's Party, and remitting foreign currency into the district that would otherwise have had to be subsidised.

## The one thing never permitted

Which brings the module to its through-line, and it is the most consistent single fact about the Meiji state's treatment of its own population.

On the seventh of April 1868 the second of the five notice boards told every village in Japan that agreeing together on an improper matter was a crime, that pressing a petition collectively was a crime, that quitting one's village by agreement was a crime, and that informers would be rewarded.

The prohibition never lapsed. It changed vocabulary and it changed statutory instrument, and it was in force every single day from 1868 to the end of the period.

The libel and press ordinances of 1875. The assembly ordinance of 1880. Then, on the twenty-fifth of December 1887, an imperial ordinance of seven articles, effective on the day of issue: secret assemblies and societies prohibited, and — the operative provision — power to order any person judged likely to conspire at or incite insurrection, or to disturb the public peace, out of the area within three *ri* of the imperial palace, with a prohibition on entering or residing there for up to three years. The timing is the tell. A petition movement had been running that autumn under three demands — recovery from the diplomatic failure over treaty revision, reduction of the land tax, and freedom of speech and assembly — and its organisers had agreed to present themselves to the Prime Minister in person on the twenty-sixth of December. The ordinance was issued on the twenty-fifth. Between the night of the twenty-sixth and the twenty-eighth, 570 people were expelled from Tokyo. Nearly half of them, 224, were from Tosa. Those who refused to go were imprisoned.

The Assembly and Political Societies Law of 1890. A preventive order in 1892. And then, on the tenth of March 1900, the Public Peace Police Law, in thirty-three articles, which gathered all of it up and added something new. Political societies and political meetings must be notified. Serving soldiers, police officers, clergy, teachers, students and pupils, women, and minors may not join a political society; women and minors may not attend a political meeting. Police may attend any political meeting, and may restrict, prohibit or dissolve outdoor assemblies where necessary to preserve public order. The Home Minister may ban a society. And Article 17 prohibited the combination and the dispute action of workers and of tenant farmers.

Two things about that statute deserve to be said slowly.

The list of persons forbidden to join a political society is, almost exactly, a list of everybody whose formation the state directly controlled — soldiers, police, clergy,

teachers, students — with women added, which doubles it. The state barred from organised politics every category of person it had spent thirty years shaping, plus half the population regardless.

And Article 17 names, as the two groups whose combination is unlawful, workers and tenant farmers: the two categories that the settlement of 1873 to 1876 had itself created. The land certificate made the tenant; the deflation and the auction made him numerous; the mill and the mine made the worker; and in 1900 the state made it a crime for either of them to act together.

The framework's usual attention goes to how often an order uses force. That is the wrong measure here. The Meiji state used the army against its own commoners on a small number of occasions across four decades — the risings of 1873, the Ise rising of 1876, Chichibu in 1884 — and each time it won quickly. Force was rare because it was not the instrument. The instrument was the permanent illegality of the cheap option, so that a person with a grievance had two roads available: petition individually and upward, where the paper could be shelved, or take up arms, where he would be destroyed. There was no corridor between them.

## Ashio: the whole ladder, tested

The copper mine at Ashio poisoned the Watarase river and the farmland below it, and the resulting thirty-year contest is the most complete test in the period of every channel a Japanese commoner had.

The parliamentary channel was tried. Tanaka Shōzō, elected for Tochigi in 1890, put his first question on the mine poisoning to the second Imperial Diet in 1891, and went on doing so.

The collective petition was tried. On the thirteenth of February 1900, farmers from the affected villages set out for Tokyo to lay their case before the government. They were intercepted by police at Kawamata in Gunma, there was bloodshed, and large numbers of them were arrested. That is the second notice board of 1868, operating without amendment, thirty-two years later, against the same act by the same kind of people.

The parliamentary channel was tried again, harder. Two days and four days after Kawamata, Tanaka questioned the government in the Diet, in the speech known by the title of his written question — that not to know one is coming to the ruin of the state is itself the ruin of the state. The Prime Minister, Yamagata Aritomo, declined to answer on the ground that he did not understand what the question meant. During the Kawamata trial Tanaka yawned in court, was charged with contempt of officials, and was sentenced to forty days' close confinement.

Then the last channel. On the twenty-third of October 1901 Tanaka resigned his seat. On the tenth of December, at Hibiya, as the emperor returned from the opening of the Diet, he ran at the carriage with a petition in his hand. He had written a will. He was seized by the police escort before he reached it.

The government's response is the most elegant piece of suppression in this study. It did not prosecute him. Prosecution would have produced a trial, and a trial would have produced a record, and the man had already decided to die. Instead the authorities took the position that a lunatic had stumbled in front of the carriage, treated the matter as requiring no action, and released him the same day. The content was removed without the man being touched.

And then the one channel that actually worked. The city was in uproar; newspapers put out extra editions; the text of the petition, which had been written for Tanaka by Kōtoku Shūsui, became widely known; students began going up to Ashio in parties to look at it. In March 1902, alarmed at the state of public feeling, the government established an investigation committee by imperial ordinance.

The committee reported in 1903 that the pollution had diminished since the prevention order of 1897, and recommended a large retention basin downstream to settle the poison and control the floods. The land chosen was the village of Yanaka. It was expropriated under the Land Expropriation Law; the houses of those who refused to move were forcibly demolished; the village ceased to exist. Tanaka moved there and lived with the remaining villagers, and died in 1913, in poverty, on the bank of the Watarase.

Diet question: refused. Collective petition: met with police. Direct appeal to the sovereign: declared meaningless. Public outcry: produced a committee. The committee produced a report, and the report produced the destruction of a village.

## The territories

The same operation appears in the territories with the dial turned, and it confirms the pattern this study has now found three times.

In Okinawa, after the annexation of the Ryukyu kingdom, the government adopted what its own historiography calls the preservation of old customs: it deliberately declined to extend the mainland's reforms, and left the kingdom's land system and its tax system substantially in place, in order not to provoke the old Ryukyuan ruling class whose cooperation it needed. The consequence for the ordinary islander was that the poll tax of Miyako and Yaeyama — a per-head levy of extraordinary severity, imposed by the kingdom and continued by the prefecture — survived the abolition of the mainland's tribute system by three decades.

The islanders used every channel. They petitioned the governor in 1892, and the petition was shelved because the old ruling class objected. In 1893 representatives went up to Tokyo to petition the central government and the Diet directly, which is precisely the act the notice boards had made criminal and which was in this instance tolerated. The poll tax was abolished in 1903, on the completion of the land survey — twenty-four years after annexation. Jahana Noboru, who campaigned for Okinawan participation in the prefecture's government, was broken by the governor's suppression and lost his reason in 1901. Okinawa became one of the heaviest emigrant-sending prefectures in Japan.

In Taiwan, taken in 1895, the administration under Kodama and Gotō issued in 1898 an ordinance reviving the *baojia* — the Qing dynasty's system of mutual surveillance and collective responsibility among grouped households — and, ten weeks later, a bandit punishment ordinance; between them a land survey was begun and monopolies in salt and camphor established.

The reading is the one this study reached in Module 4 about the writing schools, applied to extraction rather than to formation. The Meiji state did not, in its territories, import a Japanese apparatus. It annexed the incumbent one — the Ryukyuan tax system, the Chinese collective-responsibility system — because the incumbent one already worked and its personnel were already in place. The difference from the mainland is what happened next: at home the annexed apparatus was progressively converted, and the old tribute went in 1873; in the territories the old costs were preserved and the new ones added on top, and the conversion came a generation late or not at all.

## Reading the cost column against the framework

Three findings, of which the first is the module's contribution.

**Exit that remits is not exit.** This framework treats the availability of exit as the ruled's principal structural check: where people can leave for a better arrangement, the order must bid to keep them, and the bidding raises the benefit column. Meiji Japan looks at first like a strong test of that proposition and then reverses it. Exit was available in volume. It was legal, organised, advertised, and eventually promoted by the government as population policy, and the demand for it was enormous — twenty-eight thousand applications for six hundred places, in the worst year the countryside had. And it produced no upward pressure on the arrangement at all, because the person who left kept paying into it. The remittances went to the emigrant's family and to his village's school and temple and shrine, which is to say to the local burdens the centre had devolved onto the villages during the deflation that drove him out.

So the framework should carry the qualification in this form. **Where emigration is remitting rather than severing, exit ceases to be a check on the order and becomes an instrument of it: it removes precisely the people most likely to combine, converts their grievance into foreign exchange, and funds the local costs the centre has pushed down.** The diagnostic is cheap to apply and worth applying wherever emigration appears in a case: a state that licenses and organises the departure of its poor, rather than forbidding it, has usually calculated that they are worth more outside than in — and the test of that calculation is whether the money comes back.

**The measure of a cost column is not how often force is used but how narrow the corridor has been made between submission and insurrection.** From the notice board of April 1868 to Article 17 of the Public Peace Police Law of March 1900, this state never for one day permitted its common people to combine. The word changed — forming a band, secret societies, political societies, the combination of workers and tenant farmers — and the instrument changed from a plank at a crossroads to a thirty-three-article statute, and the prohibition did not. Force itself was used rarely, because it did not have to be used often: a grievance could go up as an individual petition, where it could be shelved, or it could go up as an armed rising, where it would be crushed within a fortnight, and there was nothing in between. Ashio is that structure demonstrated end to end — the Diet question refused, the petition march met with police, the appeal to the sovereign disposed of by declaring the man insane, and the only channel that moved the government at all being the newspapers, which is to say the one channel the state had not yet completely closed.

**And there is no single cost column for a population.** The certificate-holding farmer with land enough got a real benefit and was the most reliable support this order had. The tenant got a landlord and Article 17. The second son got the barracks or the filature or a berth to Honolulu. The Okinawan got a poll tax the mainland had abolished thirty years earlier. These are not degrees of the same position; they are different positions, produced by the same settlement, and they behaved differently — which is why the disorder of the 1880s came out of the silk districts and the disorder of the 1900s came out of the mills, and why neither came out of the villages where the certificates had landed on people with enough land to keep them. A study that computes one benefit column and one cost column for a whole people will get the compliance wrong, because compliance was not one decision. It was several million different ones, taken by people the same government had deliberately sorted into unlike positions four decades earlier.

## A note on sources.

The Matsukata deflation and its rural consequences are paraphrased from the Heibonsha and Britannica reference entries reproduced at Kotobank — which supply the auction of land and property for tax arrears, the sharp rise from 1883 in landholders and farmers losing land, the tens of thousands ruined by inability to repay usurers, and the transfer of ruined smallholders into wage labour and tenancy — and from a Shiga prefectural local-history compilation, which is the source for the specific mechanism of cost transfer: new taxes and large rate increases, the movement of prefectural building and prison costs onto local tax funding, and the abolition of national subsidies for prefectural public works and for district, town and village education costs, with the household levy rising faster than the land-tax levy in Shiga between 1880 and 1886. The tenancy proportions rest on the sources cited in Module 2.

The Chichibu rising is paraphrased from the Yamakawa reference entry reproduced at Historist, which supplies the sericultural character of the district, the movement's origins in debt-relief campaigning through 1884, the initial recourse to lawful petitioning of creditors and the district office and its refusal, the premature outbreak on 31 October, the temporary control of the district, and the suppression by police, army and gendarmerie by mid-November; and from a Japanese reference site on the rising, which supplies the demands — debt deferral, three years' closure of the schools, and tax reduction — the attacks on the district office, the police station and the moneylenders, and the burning of the bonds. The characterisation of the rising as the largest of the radical incidents, and the sequence of earlier incidents at Akita, Fukushima, Takada, Gunma and Kabasan, are from the Japanese Wikipedia article. No participant or casualty count is given here because the figures in circulation vary widely and none was verified.

The emigration figures are from several sources in agreement on the main series: the first public recruitment of 1884 drawing 28,000 applications for 600 places, and the sailing of the *City of Tokio* with 944 or 946 passengers, are from the Japanese Wikipedia article on Japanese emigration to Hawaii, with the breakdown of 682 adult men, 164 adult women and 98 children from a Hawaii-based Japanese-language history site; the total of 29,132 government-contract emigrants to 1894 is from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' 1985 diplomatic bluebook, which also supplies the annual figures for the United States exceeding twenty thousand in some years around 1900 and the total of about 190,000 to Brazil by 1941. The National Diet Library's Brazilian emigration history supplies the 1884 authorisation of Torres Strait pearl-shell emigration, the 1885 authorisation for Hawaii, the 1886 convention, and the twenty-six government-

contract sailings. The remittance evidence — Wakayama emigrants remitting to families and to home-village schools, temples and shrines, and the prefecture leading the country in remittances until the end of Taishō — is from Wakayama prefecture's own official site, citing the prefectural emigration history; it is a single prefecture's record and is used here as an instance rather than as a national aggregate, and the generalisation drawn from it in the closing section should be tested against national remittance data before being relied upon.

The repression statutes are from the National Archives of Japan's chronology entries and from the reference entries reproduced at Kotobank and Historist. For the Peace Preservation Ordinance of 25 December 1887: its promulgation as imperial ordinance no. 67 with immediate effect, its seven articles, the prohibition of secret assemblies and societies, and the fourth article's power of expulsion from within three *ri* of the palace with a bar of up to three years, are from the National Archives entry and the Japanese Wikipedia article, which is also the source for the 570 persons expelled between the night of 26 December and 28 December, the 224 from Tosa, and the imprisonment of those who refused; the National Archives entry supplies the connection to the Three Great Matters petition movement and the agreement to meet Itō on 26 December. For the Public Peace Police Law of 10 March 1900: the thirty-three articles, the notification requirements, the exclusion of serving soldiers, police, clergy, teachers, students, women and minors from political societies and of women and minors from political meetings, the police powers of restriction and dissolution, the Home Minister's power of prohibition, and Article 17 on the combination of workers and tenant farmers, are from the National Archives entry and the Yamakawa and Britannica entries at Kotobank, which agree; the later deletions of the women's clause in 1922 and of Article 17 in 1926, and the law's abolition in November 1945, are from the same sources.

The Ashio sequence is paraphrased from the Japanese Wikipedia articles on Tanaka Shōzō and on the Ashio incident, corroborated in outline by two Japanese reference sites: Tanaka's first question in the second Diet in 1891; the Kawamata clash of 13 February 1900 with bloodshed and mass arrest; his questions in the Diet two and four days later and Yamagata's refusal to answer on the ground that he did not understand them; the prosecution for contempt of officials arising from a yawn in court and the sentence of forty days; the resignation of 23 October 1901; the attempted direct appeal at Hibiya on 10 December 1901, the petition having been drafted by Kōtoku Shūsui; the government's disposal of the matter as a lunatic stumbling before the carriage and Tanaka's release the same day; the newspaper extras and the student visits; the investigation committee established by imperial ordinance in March 1902 and its 1903

report concluding that pollution had declined and recommending a retention basin; and the expropriation and forcible demolition of Yanaka village and Tanaka's death in 1913. The claim that no survey ever found the pollution to have ceased is from the Wikipedia article and is reported as such.

On the territories: the preservation-of-old-customs policy in Okinawa, its motive in avoiding opposition from the old ruling class, the consequent survival of the Miyako and Yaeyama poll tax, the 1892 petition to Governor Narahara and its shelving, the 1893 journey to Tokyo to petition the government and the Diet, the abolition of the poll tax in 1903 on completion of the land survey of 1899 to 1903, and the suppression and breakdown of Jahana Noboru, are from the *Kokushi daijiten* and *Nihon daihyakka* entries summarised at JapanKnowledge, a Japanese reference site on the poll tax, and a Ritsumeikan working paper on Okinawan emigration; the last is also the source for Okinawa's position as a heavy emigrant-sending prefecture. For Taiwan, the promulgation of the *hokō* ordinance on 31 August 1898, the opening of the land survey on 5 September, the bandit punishment ordinance of 5 November, and the salt and camphor monopolies of 1899 are from the Japanese Wikipedia article on the Kodama–Gotō administration; the identification of the system as a revival of the Qing *baojia* is standard but was not separately verified here. This module does not attempt a full account of either territory; the companion studies of Japanese Hokkaidō and Japanese Okinawa in this collection do that work, and the treatment here is confined to the cost column of the ordinary subject.

The list of benefits in the second section — freedom of movement following the withdrawal of the fifth notice board in November 1871, free choice of occupation and cropping, the land certificate, surnames, standing at law, and the school ladder — rests on the sources cited in Modules 1, 2 and 4 and is not separately sourced here. The enrolment figures are from the Ministry of Education's official history as cited in Module 4. The proposition that remitting emigration converts exit from a check into an instrument, and the proposition that a cost column is measured by the narrowness of the corridor between submission and insurrection, are this study's own arguments and are offered for testing.

# THIRTY-FOUR, THIRTY-FOUR, THIRTY-TWO

*Module 6 · Extraction — a settlement that did not abolish payment in kind but moved the line it was collected at, a tax base that migrated from the field to the sake cup, and an indemnity of which eighty-five per cent went to the army and less than one per cent to the ironworks the textbooks name*

## The three shares

When the government computed what the land tax reform would take, it worked from a figure inherited rather than invented. In the late Tokugawa period the customary rent paid by a cultivator to whoever held the land above him had settled at somewhere around a third of the whole harvest. The reform's designers therefore fixed the division of the crop among the three parties at, in round numbers, thirty-four per cent to the state, thirty-four to the landlord, and thirty-two to the man who grew it.

Then they did the thing that mattered, and it is easy to read past.

The landlord's payment to the state was converted to money — a fixed annual sum in yen, computed on an assessed capital value, owed whether the harvest came or not. The tenant's payment to the landlord was expressly left in kind. Rice went up from the field to the man whose name was on the certificate; yen went from that man to the treasury.

That single asymmetry is the architecture of Meiji extraction, and this module is largely an account of what followed from it.

## What the state actually collected

Begin with the state's own column, because the received picture of Meiji Japan as a land-tax state is true for about twenty-five years and then stops being true, and the moment it stops is informative.

In 1875 the government swept away the accumulated miscellaneous levies of the Tokugawa order — the compilations count 1,553 distinct varieties of them — and set in their place a much simpler structure of a national land tax with a small number of indirect taxes beside it. At the outset the land tax was more than four-fifths of national

revenue, and it remained more than half of it into the middle of the period. It was the thing that paid for the army, the schools, the railways and the stipend bonds.

Then the base migrated. An income tax was created in 1887. A business tax followed in 1896, an inheritance tax in 1905. But the instrument that actually displaced the land tax was the tax on sake. A Liquor Tax Law was enacted in October 1896; between 1896 and 1901 the rate was raised three times, in the course of the post-war armament expansion and the increased spending on state enterprises; and in 1899 the liquor tax reached 35.5 per cent of all national tax revenue and passed the land tax to become the single largest tax in Japan. The land tax briefly retook first place in 1904; the liquor tax regained it in 1909 and held it until the income tax passed it in 1918.

A state whose largest single revenue is a duty on drink is a different animal from one whose largest is a charge on land. It is collecting from consumption rather than from property; from the transaction rather than from the asset; and it needs, in order to collect at all, that the thing being taxed should pass through a market it can see.

Which is why the completion of the shift required a prohibition.

## The household that could not brew its own

In 1899 — the same year the liquor tax became the country's largest — the manufacture of sake for a household's own consumption was prohibited outright.

Home brewing had been an ordinary rural practice. A farming household with rice could make its own drink, and a household that made its own drink was invisible to the treasury: no transaction, no market price, no assessment, nothing to tax. The 1899 prohibition did not raise a rate. It abolished the untaxed alternative, and by abolishing it moved several million households from outside the base to inside it. Illicit distilling rose sharply in response, the price of legal sake having climbed with the successive increases, and enforcement was tightened accordingly — tax offices had been established in 1896, and their indirect-tax officers now conducted investigations into offences.

This is the same instrument the study met in Module 2, run to its conclusion. There, a tax demanded in yen from a household that earned in rice compelled that household into the market in order to raise the yen, and the conversion rate at which its rice became yen was the real burden. Here, a tax on a commodity a household could otherwise make for itself is made effective by making self-provision unlawful, so that the household must buy in the market in order to drink at all. In both cases the compulsion sits outside the rate. In both cases the household's route around the state is closed by statute rather than the state's share being increased by legislation.

The framework should carry this as a paired diagnostic. Where a state's tax is levied in a medium the taxed person does not earn, look for the conversion mechanism. Where a state's largest tax is on a consumable, look for the statute that outlawed making it at home. The rate is what gets debated; the closure is what does the work.

## The rice that never became money

Return now to the asymmetry, because it is where the largest extraction in Meiji Japan actually happened, and because it did not appear in the state's accounts at all.

The tenant owed his landlord in rice. The landlord owed the state in cash. So the landlord stood on the boundary between two economies, and the boundary was where the money was.

He received a quantity of grain and owed a fixed number of yen. When the price of rice rose, the grain he received was worth more and the sum he owed was unchanged, and the whole of the difference was his: the standard Japanese reference treatment of the reform puts it flatly, that because the tenant paid a high rent in rice and the landlord sold that rice to pay his tax in cash, a rise in the rice price produced a large profit for the landlord alone. The tenant, who had handed over the same volume of grain either way, got none of it.

And the arithmetic worked against the tenant from the beginning. At the price levels obtaining when the reform was made, roughly a third of the harvest was equivalent to three per cent of the assessed land value — that is, the whole of the landlord's customary share was consumed by the tax. Since no landlord would hold land for nothing, he added his margin on top, and rents rose. The reform's drafters had assumed a market in which rents would move up and down with the tax, because they had modelled the whole thing on a European agrarian economy of contracting family farms; what they had was a countryside in which the landlord's position was overwhelming and the tenant's alternative was destitution, so the rent moved in one direction.

Then, in the deflation of 1881 to 1885, the price of rice and of silk cocoons fell, the fixed money tax did not, and the households that could not meet it lost their certificates at auction to the neighbours and moneylenders who could. Tenanted land rose from about three-tenths of the arable towards nearly half. Every acre that crossed that line moved a household from the fixed-money side of the boundary to the payment-in-kind side, and moved another share of the crop into the hands of somebody who could sell it for cash.

The reduction of the rate from three per cent to two and a half in 1877 amounted, on the usual estimate, to a burden roughly a fifth lighter than the Tokugawa tribute had been. That relief was real. It went to the person holding the certificate.

So the honest summary of Meiji extraction is not that the state took more than the shogunate had. On the aggregate figures it took about the same, and after 1877 slightly less, and its share of national income fell steadily as the economy grew. What happened was that the largest single flow of surplus in Japan — the third of the harvest that moved from the man who grew it to the man above him — was privatised. It stopped being a tribute owed to a lord who had public duties attached to it and became a rent owed to a proprietor who had none, secured by a certificate the state had issued and enforced by courts the state maintained.

## What left the country

The other great flow ran outward, and it ran on the same rural households.

Raw silk was Japan's leading export from the opening of the ports to the 1930s, and the country's principal earner of foreign exchange throughout the Meiji period. About three-quarters of what was produced was exported; by 1893 Japan stood third in the world in silk exports behind China and Italy, and would pass both. The market shifted from France to the United States, and by the later 1890s the American share of Japanese silk exports ran at eighty to ninety per cent.

The government understood from the start what the commodity was for. It built a model filature at Tomioka in 1872 on French machinery driven by steam, and another at Aoichō in Tokyo the following year on the Italian water-powered pattern, in order to acquire and then propagate the technique. Everything that followed — the machinery, the warships, the rails, the foreign engineers — was bought with what the silk earned.

And silk was made by farm daughters. The cocoons came from the sericultural districts of the Kantō and Shinano hills, and the reeling was done in filatures by young women from those same districts, on contracts their fathers signed. Chichibu, where the Poor People's Party rose in 1884, was one of those districts. The chain runs: a household that cannot pay a fixed money tax on a falling silk price, sending its daughter to a filature that reels the silk that earns the foreign exchange that buys the rifles.

## What came back

In April 1895 the treaty ending the war with China imposed an indemnity, and the retrocession of the Liaodong peninsula and the costs of the garrison at Weihaiwei added to it. The total, as finally settled, came to £37,918,381 — on the order of 360

million yen, which was three or four times the annual national budget depending on which year one measures against, and rather more than the war had cost.

The manner of payment was Matsukata's idea and it was the point of the exercise. The treaty specified the sum in Chinese silver taels, which were not a coin. In May 1895 Matsukata proposed that the money be taken in sterling, convertible into gold in London, and in October the Chinese government agreed. So the indemnity was received in London as sterling drafts, converted into bullion, gold coin and Bank of England notes, and shipped to Japan. It never existed as Chinese silver in Japanese hands. It arrived as the metallic reserve that made the Coinage Act of 1897 possible, and Japan went onto the gold standard — which mattered because a silver-standard country in a gold-standard world was borrowing at a discount, and Japan intended to borrow.

What the money was spent on is the most eloquent table in this study. Of the total: about 62.7 per cent to armament expansion, about 21.9 per cent to extraordinary military expenditure, about 5.5 per cent to the property of the imperial house, about 2.8 per cent to an education fund, about 2.8 per cent to a disaster reserve, and the remainder to miscellaneous heads. Over eighty-five per cent to the armed forces. Twice as much to the emperor's private estate as to schools.

And the Yawata ironworks — the state steel plant that stands in every textbook as the emblem of Meiji industrialisation, founded in 1897 on the Chikuhō coalfield and in operation from 1901 — received, of the indemnity, less than one per cent; one compilation puts the sum allocated to its founding costs at 580,000 yen.

The people who had paid the war taxes and supplied the conscripts received, from the proceeds, an education fund of 2.8 per cent and a disaster reserve of the same.

## Who got the surplus

Set the flows side by side and the destinations are consistent.

The state's own take was moderate, declining relative to the economy, and increasingly drawn from consumption rather than from property — which is to say increasingly from everybody and decreasingly from the owners of things.

The largest single surplus, the third of the crop, went to the certificate-holding landlords, and rose as the deflation moved land into their hands. What they did with it is the link to everything else: they banked it and they invested it, in railways, in cotton spinning, in filatures. The Japanese account of the industrial revolution is explicit that the capital for it came from three sources — the landlords' rents, the banks, and the former daimyō with their commutation bonds — which is to say from the two classes the settlement of Module 2 had created and endowed.

The state's own enterprises were sold. From 1880 the government adopted rules for the disposal of official undertakings, and through the 1880s the mines, mills, shipyards and model factories built at public expense passed into private hands, generally on terms far below what they had cost to construct, and generally to the merchant houses that had been financing the government since the beginning. Out of that transfer the great combines were assembled. The Japanese reference literature treats the disposals and the currency retrenchment as two halves of one operation: the sales built up the politically connected merchant capital, while the retrenchment broke up the smallholding peasantry and delivered part of it as wage labour to the very firms that had bought the works.

And the indemnity went to the army, the navy, and the imperial estate.

## Reading extraction against the framework

Three findings, of which the first is the module's contribution.

**A state that monetises its taxes does not abolish extraction in kind; it moves the line at which extraction in kind is collected, and whoever ends up standing on that line captures the difference between the two media.** The Meiji settlement fixed the shares at roughly thirty-four to the state, thirty-four to the landlord, thirty-two to the cultivator, and then made the upper transaction a fixed money debt and left the lower one a payment in grain. The consequence was not incidental to the reform; it was the reform. The state secured a revenue immune to weather and to price. The tenant kept a liability denominated in the thing he actually produced and gained nothing when its price rose. And the certificate-holder in between owed a constant number of yen against a variable quantity of rice, and pocketed every appreciation.

The framework should therefore add a step to its medium-of-payment analysis. Having asked what medium the state demands and what medium the household earns, ask **who occupies the boundary between the two, because that person is where the surplus actually accumulates and he will be the order's most reliable political support.** He is reliable not because he has been persuaded of anything but because his position exists only so long as the certificate is enforced, the courts sit, and the tax stays denominated in money. This compounds directly with Module 2's finding that a registration is a distribution: the registration made the landlord, and the choice of medium on either side of him made him rich.

**The second is the closure diagnostic.** When Japan's largest tax became a duty on sake, the state's next move was not to raise the rate again but to make it illegal for a household to brew its own. That is the same instrument as the money land tax, applied to consumption instead of to land: the state does not increase its demand, it removes

the taxed subject's route around the demand. So, generally: **where an indirect tax becomes a state's principal revenue, look for the statute abolishing the untaxed substitute, because that statute and not the rate is where the population was brought into the base.**

**The third is not a revision but a measurement, and it is the sharpest available answer to the question of whom this order was run for.** The indemnity of 1895 is the only moment in the period when a very large sum of money arrived at the Japanese state's disposal without any prior claim on it — no creditor, no stipend, no obligation. It was pure surplus, and what a government does with pure surplus is a statement of its priorities uncontaminated by necessity. Eighty-five per cent went to the armed forces. Five and a half per cent went to the imperial house's own property. Two and eight-tenths went to education, and the same to disaster relief. The ironworks that stands in the textbooks for the industrialisation of Japan got less than one per cent.

This does not settle the argument about the Meiji state, and Module 12 will have to take that argument on properly. It does establish the terms. Read the flows rather than the rhetoric and this is an order that took a moderate and declining share for itself, privatised the largest surplus in the country to a class it had manufactured by registration, financed its machinery with the labour of farm daughters reeling silk, and spent its one windfall almost entirely on soldiers. Whether that was the price of not being partitioned is a real question and is not answered by pretending the arithmetic says something else.

## A note on sources.

The division of shares at the land tax reform — approximately thirty-four per cent to the state, thirty-four to the landlord and thirty-two to the cultivator, derived from a late-Tokugawa customary rent of around a third of the harvest — is paraphrased from the *Nihon kokugo daijiten* entry on tenant rent reproduced at Kotobank, which is also the source for the statement that the landlord's land tax thereafter became a money payment while the tenant's rent was prescribed to remain a payment in kind until the post-war land reform. That entry is a dictionary treatment and the round figures should be understood as the reform's design assumption rather than as an observed national outcome; regional rent levels varied widely and no attempt is made here to give a national average.

The observation that at contemporary price levels roughly a third of the harvest corresponded to three per cent of the assessed land value, that the landlord added his margin above the tax and rents therefore rose, and that the drafters had modelled the scheme on a European agrarian economy in which rents would move with the tax, is

paraphrased from the Japanese Wikipedia article on the reform, which also supplies the estimate that the 1877 reduction to 2.5 per cent left the burden roughly a fifth lighter than the Tokugawa tribute, and the point that a fixed sum left any increase in yield with the cultivator. The mechanism by which a rising rice price benefited the landlord alone — tenant paying in rice, landlord selling the rice to pay the tax in cash — is from a Japanese reference site's entry on the reform. The tenancy proportions and the deflation's transfer of land rest on the sources cited in Modules 2 and 5. The land price formula, computed by capitalising the residual after costs from either total yield or rent, is from the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport's historical review of land policy, which also supplies the point that certificates were issued to individuals rather than to houses.

The revenue composition is from the National Tax Agency's Tax College historical exhibitions, which are the source for the Liquor Tax Law of October 1896, the three increases between 1896 and 1901 in the context of post-war armament expansion and increased spending on state enterprises, the liquor tax reaching 35.5 per cent of national tax revenue in 1899 and passing the land tax, the reversal in 1904 and the return to first place in 1909 until the income tax overtook it in 1918, the creation of tax offices in 1896, and the total prohibition of household brewing for own consumption from 1899 together with the consequent rise in illicit distilling and the strengthening of enforcement. The Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport review supplies the creation of the income tax in 1887 and the inheritance tax in 1905 and the observation that the land tax remained more than half of national tax revenue into mid-Meiji. The figure of 1,553 varieties of miscellaneous Tokugawa taxes abolished in 1875 is from a Nara prefectural tax-education body's historical summary and is repeated in a National Diet Library collaborative reference entry.

On silk: its position as the leading export and principal foreign-exchange earner, the export of about three-quarters of production, the shift of the market from France to the United States, and the establishment of the Tomioka filature in 1872 on French steam-driven machinery and the Aoichō filature in 1873 on the Italian water-powered pattern, are from the Japanese Wikipedia article on the silk-reeling industry and from an Ehime prefectural learning database; the American share of eighty to ninety per cent from the later 1890s is from a Takasaki City University of Economics paper on direct silk exports, and Japan's third place in world silk exports by 1893 is from a Shinshū University emeritus professor's conference paper. The Kobe Customs history is the source for silk displacing green tea and rice at the head of the export list.

The indemnity figures are drawn from several sources that agree on the composition and differ slightly on the total. The settled sum of £37,918,381, comprising the war

indemnity, the Liaodong retrocession payment and the Weihaiwei garrison costs, and Matsukata's May 1895 proposal to take payment in sterling convertible into gold in London with China's agreement in October, are from a numismatic history of Japanese currency; the yen total of about 360 million, its equivalence to three or four years of national budget, and the breakdown — about 62.7 or 62.8 per cent to armament expansion, 21.9 per cent to extraordinary military expenditure, 5.5 per cent to imperial house property, 2.8 per cent to an education fund and 2.8 per cent to a disaster reserve — appear in two Japanese educational blogs citing a standard textbook and in a widely circulated summary, and the same distribution is given in a Teikoku Shoin teaching paper which also describes the receipt in London and the conversion into bullion, gold coin and British notes and states that the Yawata allocation was under one per cent. The figure of 580,000 yen allocated to Yawata's founding costs is from a single secondary source and should be verified before it is relied upon. The founding of Yawata in 1897 and its commencement of operations in February 1901, and the Coinage Act of 1897 establishing the gold standard, are standard chronology confirmed by the same sources.

The disposal of government enterprises from 1880, the resulting formation of the great combines, and the reading of the disposals and the currency retrenchment as two halves of one operation delivering both concentrated capital and a supply of wage labour, are paraphrased from the Heibonsha and Britannica entries on Matsukata's fiscal policy reproduced at Kotobank; specific sale prices and purchasers were not verified for this module and none is asserted. The account of landlords' rents, bank deposits and the former daimyō's commutation bonds as the three sources of industrial capital is paraphrased from a Japanese modern-history teaching site and is the received account in the Japanese literature rather than a finding of this study.

The propositions that monetisation moves rather than abolishes extraction in kind and enriches whoever stands on the boundary, and that an indirect tax's decisive instrument is the statute abolishing the untaxed substitute, are this study's own arguments and are offered for testing.

# THE PRIVATE PERSON CAME FOURTH

*Module 7 · Information and Suppression — a defamation law built from a liberal petition and issued with the throne at the top of it, a press that held its own funeral, and a foreign audience that stopped mattering the moment the treaties were revised*

## The petition and what was made of it

In the mid-1870s a study group of young men working on English law, gathered around Ono Azusa under the name Kyōzon Dōshū, put a proposal to the government. A modern state, they argued, required legislation protecting the honour of the individual: a person defamed in print ought to have a remedy, as he did in England.

On the twenty-eighth of June 1875 the Council of State promulgated, as proclamation no. 110, a Defamation Ordinance in eight articles. It is generally described as Japan's first law for the protection of personal honour, and it was drafted, on the standard account, out of that petition.

Its structure is the thing to look at, and it can be read off the article numbers alone. Article 1 defines the offence, combining the imputation of discreditable facts with the spreading of ill fame without them. Article 2 provides for defamation of the emperor. Article 3, defamation of the imperial family. Article 4, defamation of officials. Article 5, defamation of ordinary private persons — with penalties lighter than those of the three preceding articles. The maximum penalty was three years' imprisonment.

The petitioners had asked for a law protecting the individual from being libelled. What they were given was a law in which the individual appears in the fifth article and is worth less than an official, who is worth less than a member of the imperial house, who is worth less than the emperor. Nothing in the drafting is dishonest — a defamation law was indeed enacted, and private persons genuinely acquired a remedy they had not had — and the ordering is not concealed. It is simply printed, in sequence, as the order of value.

The framework has now watched this operation three times: an imported form taken in and re-terminated so that it discharges upward. The Great Teaching failed because it imported a creed; the Rescript on Education succeeded because it imported nothing and merely redirected a morality already held; the school system succeeded because it annexed the writing schools rather than replacing them. Here the same move

is applied to a legal instrument. The English law of defamation protects an individual's reputation against other individuals. The Japanese version keeps the form and installs a hierarchy in it, so that the law's principal work is protecting the state from its subjects rather than the subjects from one another.

## Permission from the Home Ministry

Issued on the same day, as proclamation no. 111, was a Newspaper Ordinance, and its first article establishes the regime:

> 凡ソ新聞紙及時々ニ刷出スル雑誌雑報ヲ発行セントスル者ハ、持主若クハ社主ヨリ其ノ府県庁ヲ経由シテ願書ヲ内務省ニ捧ケ、允准ヲ得ベシ

Whosoever would publish a newspaper, or a magazine or miscellany printed at intervals, shall, through the proprietor or the company's principal, submit a petition to the Home Ministry by way of his prefectural office, and obtain permission.

Publishing without it was a criminal matter: the publication prohibited, and a fine of a hundred yen on the proprietor, the editor and the printer each. Falsely claiming official sanction cost between one and two hundred yen and the confiscation of the press.

The substantive prohibitions followed: advocacy of overthrowing the government, and defamation of established law. The penalty was imprisonment, and it was used.

## The memorial service

In the first year of the two ordinances, forty-seven people were punished under them, imprisonment included. Between 1875 and 1880, 203 journalists went to gaol.

Two things happened that the government had not planned for.

The first is that the papers kept printing and their circulations went up. The *Hyōron shinbun* had its responsible editor arrested repeatedly and its attacks on the Ōkubo government intensified and its sales rose with them, until it was banned outright in 1876. The pattern held generally: prosecution advertised the prosecuted.

The second is the *Meiroku zasshi*. The Meirokusha had been founded in the autumn of 1873 by Mori Arinori on his return from America, with Fukuzawa Yukichi, Katō Hiroyuki, Nakamura Masanao, Nishi Amane, Nishimura Shigeki, Tsuda Mamichi and others — the enlightenment society of the new order, whose members included the man who would become Minister of Education and the man who would become president of the Imperial University. Its journal had appeared since March

1874 and was the leading organ of the intellectual project the Charter Oath had promised when it said that knowledge should be sought throughout the world. On the promulgation of the two ordinances the society debated whether to continue and stopped, at issue forty-three, in November 1875, and effectively dissolved.

The enlightenment society founded by the future Minister of Education closed its own journal rather than publish under a law his colleagues had passed.

And on the ordinances' first anniversary in 1876 every newspaper office in Tokyo and Yokohama suspended publication for the day and held, jointly, a great memorial service for the newspapers — a Buddhist rite for the hungry dead, performed for themselves. It is the most elegant piece of protest in this study and it changed nothing at all.

## The instrument that actually worked

What the government learned in those first years is the technical core of this module, and it learned it by getting the thing wrong first.

Criminal prosecution of writers is expensive, slow, public, and productive of martyrs. Two hundred and three imprisonments across five years, against a press whose circulation was rising and which was holding funerals for itself in the street, is not a successful suppression. So the instrument changed.

On the fifth of July 1876 the ordinance was amended to give the Home Minister an administrative power: to prohibit or suspend the publication of any newspaper or magazine carrying matter injurious to public safety — a phrase later rendered as disturbance of public tranquillity. In October 1880 a second head was added for matter corrupting public morals. No court was involved. No offence had to be proved. The standard Japanese reference treatment states the consequence without hedging: from then on it was this power, rather than the criminal provisions, that functioned as the central weapon of the government's control over speech.

Then, on the sixteenth of April 1883, after the political crisis of 1881 and the formation of the parties, came a complete revision. It tightened everything, introduced a system of security deposits, extended the power of administrative prohibition and suspension to prefectural governors as well as the Home Minister, and closed the loophole the trade had invented — the substitute newspaper, a paper registered in reserve so that when one title was suspended its staff could continue publishing under the other, and the practice of retaining a nominal editor whose function was to go to prison when required.

Within a month of the revision, forty-seven papers ceased publication. The national total, which had stood at 355 the previous year, was 199 by the end of that year. It was known in the trade as the newspaper extermination law.

**A state suppressing information moves, if it is competent, from punishing the speaker to disabling the channel** — because the speaker's punishment is a story and the channel's closure is not. The Meiji government took eight years to make that move and then made it decisively, and the difference between the two instruments is the difference between two hundred and three imprisonments producing a rising circulation and one amendment producing a press half the size it had been the year before.

## Within the limits of law

The constitution of 1889 granted the subject liberty of speech, of writing and publication, and of assembly and association — within the limits of law. The qualifying phrase is not a caveat on the right; it is the location of the right. What the law permits is what is permitted, and the law at that date was the Newspaper Ordinance as revised in 1883.

The trajectory afterwards is genuinely mixed, and the mixture should be recorded rather than flattened. In December 1887 an amendment converted the publishing regime from one of permission to one of notification — a real liberalisation, and the end of a system in which the Home Ministry decided who might own a newspaper. In March 1897, with the Diet sitting and the parties established, the Home Minister's powers of prohibition and suspension, long the central grievance, were abolished. The ordinance was replaced in 1909 by a Newspaper Law which reimposed a good deal.

So the picture is not a straight descent. Through the 1890s Japan had a functioning party press, a Diet in which ministers were attacked by name, and a public argument about taxation and treaty revision that was loud and continuous. The suppression of the 1870s and 1880s had been aimed at a movement demanding a parliament, and once the parliament existed the pressure came off the channel that had demanded it.

It came back down on a different one.

## The audience that stopped mattering

This study has been tracking a third audience since the Landscape: the treaty powers, whose recognition the Meiji state needed and could not compel. That audience produced, in the early years, the only reliable external check on what the government did to its own people.

The pattern was established in 1873. The prohibition of Christianity had produced the deportation of the Urakami community — 3,394 exiled, 662 dead — and the foreign ministers protested, and the Iwakura embassy was confronted about it by the American president, the British queen and the Danish king, and was made to understand that treaty revision was not available to a state that imprisoned people for their religion. The notice boards came down in February 1873, and the lifting was declared abroad and not declared at home.

That is a real constraint and it operated for a quarter of a century, and the whole diplomacy of the 1880s — the Rokumeikan, the codes drafted on European models, the mixed courts proposed and withdrawn — is a state performing acceptability for an audience that held something it wanted.

Then it got what it wanted. Extraterritoriality ended with the revised treaties that came into force in 1899; tariff autonomy followed in stages to 1911.

In December 1910, while twenty-six people were being tried in a closed court in Tokyo, a protest meeting in New York, at which Emma Goldman spoke, adopted a resolution addressed to the Japanese Prime Minister. It made no difference whatever. Twelve of the defendants were hanged the following month.

**A distant audience constrains an order only for as long as it holds something the order cannot obtain otherwise.** In 1873 the treaty powers held the consular courts and the tariff schedule, and the Japanese government adjusted its religious policy accordingly. By 1910 they held nothing Japan needed, and foreign protest had become, precisely, foreign opinion. The seam that ran outward did not have to be closed by anybody; it lapsed, because the leverage that had kept it open was purchased and retired.

## Article 73

The Criminal Code that came into force in October 1908 contained an article providing that whoever caused or attempted to cause harm to the emperor, the grand empress dowager, the empress dowager, the empress, the crown prince or the imperial grandson should be punished with death. Death alone: no lesser penalty was available, and the attempt and the preparation carried the same sentence as the act. Offences against the imperial house were tried by the Great Court of Cassation at first and final instance. There was no appeal.

In May 1910 a machinist in Nagano named Miyashita Takichi was arrested for an explosives offence, having made a bomb and tested it the previous November. He and three others — Kanno Suga, Niimura Tadao and Koga Rikisaku — had discussed using it on the emperor. The plan was inchoate and went no further.

What followed was not an investigation but a sweep. Several hundred people were arrested across the country, socialists and anarchists and a good many with no connection to anything. Twenty-six were indicted under the article. The trial was held in closed court, at a single instance, with no appeal. On the eighteenth of January 1911 the court sentenced twenty-four of them to death and two to terms of imprisonment.

The following day, by the emperor's benevolence, twelve of the death sentences were commuted to imprisonment for life. On the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth of January the other twelve were hanged, Kōtoku Shūsui among them — the man who had drafted Tanaka Shōzō's petition to the emperor nine years earlier.

The modern Japanese assessment, which this study accepts, is that the case beyond the original four was a fabrication: a plot constructed by the prosecution to make one small conspiracy into a national one, so that the whole of the socialist and anarchist movement could be destroyed at once. It was, and the years that followed are known in Japanese as the winter period.

Three features of the case belong in this module rather than in a chapter on justice.

The first is the structure of the mercy. The offence was one the throne's law made capital without discretion; the reprieve was granted in the throne's name as an act of benevolence; and the whole prosecution had been mounted on the ground of a danger to the throne. The same figure supplied the crime, the mandatory sentence, and the pardon of half of it. That is not a cynical arrangement — it is precisely what a state built on an unrevocable warrant looks like when the warrant is used — but it is worth naming, because a sovereign who can only be defended and never argued with produces exactly this: an offence with no defence and a mercy with no criterion.

The second is what happened to one of the reprieved. Takagi Kenmyō, a Shin Buddhist priest whose sentence was commuted, killed himself in Akita prison the following June, after his own sect struck him from the clerical register. The formation apparatus, which Module 4 traced from the temple to the classroom, delivered the last blow itself, unprompted.

The third is that it worked. There was no press campaign, no Diet crisis, and no rescue by the newspapers of the kind that had at least produced a committee for Ashio in 1902. By 1910 the state did not need the Home Minister's suspension power, which it had given up in 1897, because it had something better: a capital statute with no appeal, a closed court, and forty years of formation which had made an attack on the throne not a political act but a desecration.

## Reading suppression against the framework

Three findings.

**The first is a reading instrument, and it is cheap.** A new order's hierarchy of value is stated more plainly in its defamation and sedition statutes than in its constitution, because a constitution announces principles and a defamation statute has to enumerate protected persons in order to work. The Japanese ordinance of 1875 puts the emperor in article two, the imperial family in article three, officials in article four, and the ordinary subject in article five with lighter penalties attached. No constitutional text in this period says that an official's reputation is worth more than a farmer's; the ordinance has to say it, because it has to price it. So: **read a new state's law of defamation, insult or sedition by its order of articles and its schedule of penalties, and it will tell you the order's ranking of persons in terms the state itself had to commit to.**

**The second is developmental.** The Meiji government spent five years prosecuting journalists — 203 imprisonments — and achieved a press with rising circulation that held a mock funeral for itself in the street. It then acquired an administrative power to suspend and prohibit without any court at all, and the Japanese literature is explicit that this, and not the criminal law, became its main instrument; when the power was extended and tightened in 1883 the number of newspapers in Japan fell from 355 to 199 inside a year. **A state suppressing information moves, as it becomes competent, from punishing the speaker to disabling the channel, because prosecution converts a writer into a story while a suspension order converts a newspaper into nothing.** The date of that transition in any case is worth establishing, because it marks the point at which an order stopped improvising.

**The third compounds the running finding of this whole study.** From the Landscape onward this order has been shown adjusting its conduct for an audience it could not coerce: repaying ninety-two per cent of its foreign debt while writing off five-sixths of the domestic; declaring the lifting of the Christian prohibition abroad and not at home; deleting an informer's reward from a notice board forty-eight days after foreign ministers objected; writing into the Rescript on Education a claim that its Way did not go astray applied within the country or without. Every one of those adjustments was purchased with a specific thing the treaty powers held: consular jurisdiction and the tariff schedule.

Those were surrendered in 1899 and, by stages, 1911. And the external check went with them. In 1873 a protest by foreign ministers moved a domestic religious policy within weeks. In 1910 a protest meeting in New York, on a case that hanged twelve people after a closed single-instance trial, moved nothing.

So the framework should carry the qualification in this form. **The distant audience is a check on an order only while it holds something the order cannot get any**

**other way, and an order that succeeds in obtaining that thing has thereby abolished the check.** This is not a moral irony; it is a structural feature of any arrangement in which external recognition is being purchased rather than owed. The reforms bought with it were real — the ban on Christianity was lifted, the codes were written, the informer's reward was struck out — and they were bought, and when the buying was finished the seller went away. That is the shape of the whole Meiji external relationship, and it explains why the treatment of dissent in this order gets harsher after 1899 rather than milder, at exactly the moment when a story of steady liberalisation would predict the opposite.

## A note on sources.

The first article of the Newspaper Ordinance is quoted from the transcription of Council of State proclamation no. 111 of Meiji 8/6/28 held by the Japan Center for Asian Historical Records at the National Archives; the translation is this study's own. The eight-article structure of the Defamation Ordinance, proclamation no. 110 of the same date — with the emperor in article two, the imperial family in article three, officials in article four, and private persons in article five with lighter penalties, and a maximum of three years' imprisonment — is paraphrased from the Yamakawa and Heibonsha reference entries reproduced at Kotobank and Historist, which also supply its origin in a petition by Ono Azusa's English-law study group Kyōzon Dōshū and its repeal on the coming into force of the Criminal Code on 1 January 1882. The article texts themselves were not read for this module; the ordering is reported as the reference literature describes it and would be worth checking against the *Hōrei zensho* text before further weight is put on it.

The history of the Newspaper Ordinance is from the Yamakawa entry at Historist and the Heibonsha entry at Kotobank, in close agreement: the antecedent regulations of 1869 and 1873; the prohibition of advocacy of overthrowing the government and of defamation of established law; the imprisonment of journalists including Suehiro Tetchō; the addition on 5 July 1876 of the Home Minister's administrative power to prohibit or suspend for injury to public safety and on 12 October 1880 for corruption of public morals; the Heibonsha entry's judgement that this administrative power rather than the criminal provisions became the central weapon of the government's control of speech; the complete revision of 16 April 1883 introducing security deposits, extending administrative power to prefectural governors, and banning the substitute-newspaper device; the conversion from permission to notification on 29 December 1887; the abolition of the administrative powers of prohibition and suspension on 24 March 1897; and the replacement of the ordinance by the

Newspaper Law in 1909. The figure of 203 journalists imprisoned between 1875 and 1880, the closure of 47 papers within a month of the 1883 revision, the fall in the national total from 355 to 199 within that year, and the nickname newspaper extermination law are from the Japanese Wikipedia article on the ordinance, which cites a 1981 article by Yayoshi Mitsunaga in *Shuppan kenkyū*; that underlying article has not been consulted. The figure of 47 persons punished in the first year, and the joint suspension of publication and memorial service held by the Tokyo and Yokohama newspaper offices on the first anniversary, are from a Chūgoku Shimbun peace-media historical series and rest on that single source. The fate of the *Hyōron shinbun* — repeated arrest of its responsible editors, rising circulation, and prohibition in 1876 — is from a Japanese reference site.

The Meirokusha material is from the Japanese Wikipedia article on the society: its founding in autumn 1873 by Mori Arinori with Fukuzawa Yukichi, Katō Hiroyuki, Nakamura Masanao, Nishi Amane, Nishimura Shigeki, Tsuda Mamichi, Mitsukuri Shūhei, Sugi Kōji and Mitsukuri Rinshō; the publication of *Meiroku zasshi* from March 1874; and its cessation at issue 43 in 1875 on the promulgation of the two ordinances, with the society's effective dissolution. A Japanese reference site dates the closure to November 1875.

Article 29 of the constitution is paraphrased rather than quoted, on the same basis as Articles 1 and 3 in Module 3: its wording was not verified against a primary text in preparing this module.

The treason case is paraphrased from the Japanese Wikipedia articles on the Kōtoku incident and on treason cases generally, from the Yamakawa and Shōgakukan entries at Kotobank, and from two Japanese reference sites, which agree on the following: the terms of Criminal Code article 73, in force from October 1908, prescribing death alone for harming or attempting to harm the emperor, grand empress dowager, empress dowager, empress, crown prince or imperial grandson; the trial of offences against the imperial house by the Great Court of Cassation at first and final instance without appeal; Miyashita Takichi's manufacture of a bomb at the Akashina sawmill and his test explosion of 3 November 1909; his arrest on 25 May 1910 for an explosives offence; the subsequent arrest of several hundred people nationwide including persons unconnected with the matter; the indictment of twenty-six; the closed first hearing of 10 December 1910; the judgment of 18 January 1911 sentencing twenty-four to death and two to prison terms; the commutation of twelve on 19 January by the emperor's benevolence; and the executions of 24 and 25 January. Sources differ on whether eleven or twelve were hanged on the twenty-fourth with Kanno Suga on the twenty-fifth; the total of twelve is not in dispute. The characterisation of the case beyond the original

four defendants as a fabrication is the settled modern Japanese assessment, stated in these terms by the reference works cited, and is adopted here rather than argued. The suicide of Takagi Kenmyō in Akita prison in June following his removal from the clerical register by the Ōtani branch of Shin Buddhism, and the New York protest meeting of 12 December 1910 at which a protest addressed to Prime Minister Katsura was adopted, are from the Japanese Wikipedia article on the Kōtoku incident.

The Urakami deportations and the 1873 removal of the notice boards rest on the sources cited in Module 3; the debt settlement proportions on those cited in the Landscape; the amendment of the third notice board on those cited there. The dates of the ending of extraterritoriality in 1899 and of the completion of tariff autonomy by 1911 are standard chronology and were not separately verified for this module. The proposition that a state's defamation statute states its hierarchy of persons more plainly than its constitution, the proposition that competent suppression moves from punishing the speaker to disabling the channel, and the proposition that a distant audience checks an order only while it holds something the order cannot otherwise obtain, are this study's own arguments and are offered for testing.

# NO SUCCESSOR WAS NAMED

*Module 8 · Elite Coordination and the Default — an arrangement in which every group with standing was given a position worth defending, a coordinating body that had no legal existence, and one component that was insulated so thoroughly it no longer needed the arrangement at all*

## What the default is, and what it is not

The proposition this module tests is not about loyalty and not about ideology. It is an observation about which hierarchies last: that the durable ones are constructed so that each person within them, acting purely in defence of his own position, thereby defends the whole arrangement — so that the arrangement is held up by people who need not agree with one another, need not like one another, and need not have any view about the arrangement at all. Coordination among men who despise each other is the ordinary condition of a working order, and it is achieved not by persuasion but by the geometry of their positions.

It follows that fracture comes from a specific place. Not from the ruled, who were priced in Module 5 and who cannot reach the floor. From a group *inside* the hierarchy — with standing, with means, with organisation — whose position has stopped paying, or whose position can be defended by some route other than defending the arrangement.

Meiji Japan is an unusually clean case, because the men who built it were explicit about what they were doing. They had watched a settlement collapse. They knew, better than any group of state-builders in this collection, exactly which links had failed in the order they had just destroyed, because they had been standing on those links themselves. And they set about building an arrangement in which every group that could threaten it was handed something worth more to that group than the arrangement's overthrow.

They very nearly succeeded. The way in which they failed is the subject of this module, and it is not the way anyone expected.

## The first fracture, in the fifth year

The test came almost at once, and it took out half the government.

In the autumn of 1873 the councillors remaining in Tokyo, Saigō Takamori foremost among them, resolved to send an envoy to Korea and, if the mission were

rebuffed, to treat the rebuff as a cause of war. The party that had been abroad for eighteen months — Iwakura, Ōkubo, Kido — came home and reversed it, on the ground that the country could not afford a war and that the internal work was unfinished. Saigō resigned. So did Itagaki Taisuke of Tosa, Etō Shinpei of Hizen, Gotō Shōjirō and Soejima Taneomi. The Council of State lost about half its members in a fortnight.

The dispute is usually narrated as a quarrel about foreign policy, and it was, and it was also about something a good deal more structural. The question underneath it was what the country was to do with several hundred thousand men whose hereditary income was being liquidated, whose swords were about to be taken off the street, and whose entire formation had trained them for a single occupation. Saigō's proposal was, among other things, a use for them. Its defeat left them without one.

What happened next is the most instructive thing in the module, because the same fracture produced two entirely different exits.

In January 1874 Itagaki and Gotō submitted a memorial demanding a popularly elected assembly. That is the beginning of the movement for freedom and popular rights, and its logic is exact: men excluded from the inner circle of the government demanded that the circle be widened by an institution, and spent the next sixteen years building parties, newspapers and local associations to force it. In February 1874 Etō raised Saga, and was hanged. In 1876 the risings at Kumamoto, Akizuki and Hagi. In 1877 Saigō raised Satsuma and was destroyed.

Two routes out of the same exclusion — build an institution that admits you, or take up arms — and the government's response to each was different and each response worked. The armed route it crushed with a conscript army in seven months. The institutional route it fought for sixteen years and then, in 1890, conceded, and then spent a further decade working out how to live with what it had conceded.

By 1878 the shizoku as a bloc with standing and means had ceased to exist. Kido was dead, Saigō was dead, Ōkubo was assassinated in the street. And the arrangement did not tremble, which is the finding of Module 1: the founding was complete because it survived its founders.

## Building positions worth defending

What followed, over the next fifteen years, is a systematic exercise in giving every group that mattered a position whose defence would defend the whole.

**The old aristocracy** received a peerage. On the seventh of July 1884 an Imperial Household Ministry directive, drafted under Itō Hirobumi as head of the Bureau for the Investigation of Institutions, sorted the existing nobility into five ranks. The criteria

attached to it are the interesting part. Prince went to the former regental houses, the Tokugawa main line, and those of great merit to the state. Marquis to the highest court families, the Tokugawa collaterals, the governors of domains assessed above 150,000 *koku*, and those of merit. Earl, viscount and baron ran down the same double scale — inherited standing on one side, service to the state on the other — so that every one of the five tiers had a door in it through which the men of the Restoration could walk. And they did: the new peers of merit rapidly outnumbered nothing, but they diluted everything, and the two groups were made members of one body with a shared interest in that body's privileges.

The purpose was stated in advance and was not secret. With a parliament coming, the peerage was to be the bulwark of the throne and the mother body of an upper house. The House of Peers was established by imperial ordinance in 1889 with the peerage as its constituency, and it sat as a chamber of equal legislative power to the elected one, which meant that no measure passed by the men the landlords elected could become law without the consent of the men the state had ennobled.

**The bureaucracy** received a career. And it received it at a very precise moment. The higher civil service examination had been introduced in the late 1880s, but the imperially appointed posts at the top remained freely fillable, and in 1898 the first party cabinet — Ōkuma's — filled some of them with party men. That cabinet lasted four months. In March 1899 the second Yamagata cabinet amended the Civil Service Appointment Ordinance so that imperial appointments other than the very highest could be made only by promoting officials who had passed the higher examination and served a prescribed term.

Read the dates together. The parties reached the ministries once, and within months the door was welded shut behind them. What that gave every official in Japan was a position that depended on the examination and the seniority ladder and not on any minister — and therefore an interest in the examination and the ladder, and therefore an interest in the arrangement that maintained them, and no interest at all in a party's success.

**The industrial and commercial houses** received the state's own works. Through the 1880s the mines, mills, shipyards and model factories built at public expense were sold, generally far below construction cost, generally to the houses that had been financing the government since 1868. Their proprietors' positions thereafter depended on the enforcement of contracts, the stability of the currency, the tariff, and the government's contracts for ships and rails.

**The landlords** received the certificate, and Module 6 has already shown what the certificate was worth to them. Their position depended on the land registry, the courts and the police.

**And the two victorious domains divided the armed forces between them** — Chōshū men taking the army, Satsuma men the navy. This is the default in miniature and it is worth pausing on, because it is not a friendship. Chōshū and Satsuma had been enemies within living memory and their leading men disliked each other cordially. What held them together was that each faction's claim on its service rested on the same principle — that the Restoration domains were entitled to the state's commanding heights — and neither could attack the other's claim without dissolving its own. They coordinated because their positions were symmetrical, not because they were friends.

**The court nobility, the former daimyō, the schoolteachers, the police, the village headmen turned prefectural officials** — each was given something whose value depended on the arrangement continuing.

By the mid-1890s this was, on the framework's own criteria, an unusually well-constructed default. There was no substantial group with standing and means whose position was worth less than its overthrow.

## Nine men who did not exist

Except that the arrangement had a hole in the middle of it, and the hole was where the constitution had put the sovereign.

The constitution of 1889 vested rule in the emperor and declared him sacred and inviolable. That is a very cheap arrangement — Module 3 showed Itō specifying it in a closed session precisely because it was the only axis available — and it has one severe consequence. A sovereign who cannot be argued with also cannot be seen to choose, because a visible choice is a position, and a position can be opposed, and opposing it would be desecration. So the emperor could not, in practice, decide. And the constitution contained no provision whatever for how a prime minister was to be selected.

Somebody had to select one. The people who did were nine men: Itō Hirobumi, Kuroda Kiyotaka, Yamagata Aritomo, Matsukata Masayoshi, Inoue Kaoru, Saigō Tsugumichi, Ōyama Iwao, and later Katsura Tarō and Saionji Kinmochi. Eight of the nine were Satsuma or Chōshū men; only Saionji came from the court nobility. Every man who held the premiership in the Meiji period except Ōkuma joined them.

They had no constitutional or statutory existence of any kind. The nearest thing to a warrant was a rescript of special treatment as men of great merit, granted to Kuroda and Itō in 1889 and to some but not all of the others, and the Japanese scholarship is

clear that the group did not depend on the rescript. What made it real was practice: when Matsukata's cabinet collapsed in December 1897 the emperor consulted Kuroda alone; before forming his third cabinet Itō asked that the elder statesmen be summoned to a conference; the meeting held on the tenth of January 1898 was recorded by the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal in the words that the elders attended at court; and from that point the palace treated consultation of them as an institution.

And here is the detail that makes this more than a curiosity. Itō did not want it this way. He had wanted the function of recommending premiers lodged in the Privy Council, a body that did legally exist, and he wrote as much in a memorandum in 1896 — and concluded that the Privy Council was too riven internally to carry it, so that for the present the matter would have to be settled among the men of the domain cliques. The most important recurring decision in the Japanese state stayed outside the law because the man who wrote the law could not find a lawful home for it.

One of them is reported to have described the position exactly, saying that an elder statesman is a *kampaku* — a regent. The office abolished in the first sentence of the Restoration decree of January 1868 had been reconstituted, informally and in the plural, within twenty years.

## Buying in the parties

The great success of the default, and the one that shows the mechanism working as designed, is what happened to the landlord party.

The Diet opened in 1890 with a franchise restricted to men paying fifteen yen in direct national tax — which is to say, in the main, to the certificate-holding landlords of Module 6. They arrived with a coherent programme: reduce the land tax, cut government spending, give the people's strength a rest. And the government arrived with a programme of armaments. For most of a decade the two fought each other to a standstill through dissolutions, elections and budget crises.

Then, in September 1900, Itō Hirobumi founded a political party.

The man who had spent the previous quarter-century constructing the state against the parties, who had drafted the constitution specifically to keep the sovereign's authority unbound, formed the Rikken Seiyūkai and became its president, and took office at its head. The arrangement it embodied was not ideological. It was a trade: the landlords in the constituencies supplied budget majorities, and the government supplied railways, harbours, roads and schools in the districts that supplied them. A landlord who had been a tax rebel in 1892 was by 1905 a man whose district's branch line depended on his party's relations with the ministries.

That is the default performing its central function on a group that had genuinely stopped benefiting. Rather than continue to fight men with standing and means who were outside the arrangement, the arrangement moved to include them, on terms that made the defence of their new position identical with the defence of the whole. It is the single most effective repair in the Meiji record.

## The component that did not need the arrangement

And in the same period the same government was building, in the name of protecting the arrangement, the one position that would not be held by it.

The pieces went in separately and each had a defensible reason.

The independence of the supreme command: from 1878 the general staff was placed outside the war ministry and reported to the throne directly, on the argument that operational command should not be at the mercy of political fluctuation.

The right of direct memorial: under the cabinet regulations the service ministers could go to the emperor on matters of military command without passing through the prime minister.

And in 1900 — the second Yamagata cabinet again, the year after the civil service ordinance — the requirement that the ministers of war and the navy be serving generals or lieutenant-generals, admirals or vice-admirals. The stated purpose was to prevent the influence of the parties reaching the military.

Every one of those was a defensive measure. Taken together they produced something none of them was meant to produce. The army now selected its own minister from a pool it alone controlled; it could reach the throne without the cabinet; and its operational sphere was constitutionally beyond the cabinet's reach. The consequence is arithmetical rather than political. A war minister who disliked a government's policy could resign; and if the army declined to nominate a successor, no cabinet could be formed or continued at all, because a cabinet without a war minister was not a cabinet.

In 1912 the army asked the second Saionji cabinet for two new divisions. The cabinet refused, on the ground that it could not afford them after the war with Russia. The War Minister, Uehara Yūsaku, used the right of direct memorial to hand his resignation to the emperor in person, bypassing the Prime Minister entirely.

The army named no successor.

The cabinet fell.

The following year the Yamamoto cabinet struck the word *serving* out of the qualification, so that officers on the reserve and retired lists might in principle hold the posts. And the army's response was immediate and instructive: it moved a portion of

the war minister's business across to the Chief of the General Staff, whose office sat inside the independence of the supreme command where no cabinet could reach it. The veto had been trimmed, so the substance was relocated to where the trimming could not follow. No reserve officer ever did hold the post.

## Reading the default against the framework

Three findings, of which the first is the module's contribution and the second is close behind it.

**A default arrangement is not broken by the group that stops benefiting. It is broken by the group whose position can be defended without defending the arrangement.**

This is a correction to the way the fracture question is usually put, and Meiji Japan states it about as clearly as any case could. Take the groups that genuinely stopped benefiting. The shizoku, in 1873, had lost everything and had arms and organisation and prestige, and they fractured — and the arrangement destroyed them in four years, because their position, once the stipends were bonds and the swords were off the street, gave them no lever on the machinery at all. The landlords, through the 1890s, were paying the largest tax and getting battleships, and they fractured — and the arrangement bought them in, because their position gave them a lever (the budget) that could be traded against something they wanted (public works), which is exactly what a lever inside an arrangement is for.

The army did not stop benefiting. It was the best-provided component in the entire order: it took the largest share of the budget every year, it had received eighty-five per cent of the Chinese indemnity, and it had just won two wars. What it had was something no other component possessed — a position whose defence did not run through the arrangement. It could obtain what it wanted by breaking the government rather than by bargaining with it, and in December 1912 that is what it did, over two divisions.

So the framework should carry the diagnostic in this form. **Look through a hierarchy for the component whose position is protected by a mechanism the rest of the arrangement cannot reach** — a veto with no counter-veto, a monopoly on supplying a required office, a channel to the apex that bypasses the coordinating body, a sphere declared constitutionally out of bounds. That component is not the disaffected one. It is very often the best-treated one. And it is the one that will end the arrangement, because for it alone the arrangement is optional.

The bitter part is that every device producing this condition was installed *to protect* the arrangement. Yamagata sealed the bureaucracy against the parties in 1899 and the

army against the parties in 1900, and both were defensive, and the first worked perfectly — a sealed civil service is a component whose position depends entirely on the arrangement's rules, so its holders defend those rules. The second produced the opposite result, because the army had, in addition to insulation, its own means of coercion and a constitutional doctrine placing that means beyond review. **Insulation plus an independent instrument of force is not a component of a default; it is a second sovereign inside it.**

**The second finding concerns the hole in the middle.** The Meiji constitution made its apex cheap by making it unarguable, and thereby made it unable to decide, since a sacred and inviolable person cannot be seen choosing between factions. The decisions still had to be made, so they migrated to a body of nine men with no legal existence whatever, of whom eight came from two provinces. Itō tried to bring the function inside the Privy Council and could not.

The framework should record this as a general consequence rather than a Japanese peculiarity. **Where an order's apex is made unarguable in order to make it cheap, the actual work of coordination migrates to an informal body outside the written arrangement — and that body cannot be reformed, criticised, succeeded or replaced, because it does not formally exist.** The genrō could not be reformed because there was nothing to reform. It could not be succeeded because there was no procedure for admission. It could only die out, which it did, and when it did, nothing inherited the function — after which the only body that could reliably impose its will on a cabinet was the one holding the army.

**The third is a note on how the coordination actually felt from inside, and it matters because it is so easily sentimentalised.** These men did not like each other. Itō and Yamagata spent thirty years in a rivalry that neither concealed. Ōkubo and Saigō had been boyhood friends from the same Kagoshima ward and one of them ended by hunting the other to death at Shiroyama. Satsuma and Chōshū divided the navy and the army between them not out of trust but because each faction's claim rested on a principle the other could not attack without destroying its own. The Seiyūkai bargain was struck between a founder of the state and men who had spent a decade denouncing him.

None of that mattered, because none of it had to. The arrangement was built so that men who detested one another would each, in guarding what he held, guard what the others held too. That is what a default is. It is also why its failure, when it came, did not look like a quarrel or a betrayal or a change of heart. It looked like a routine ministerial resignation, followed by nothing — an office not filled, a name not put forward, a vacancy that no one else in Japan had the power to fill.

## A note on sources.

The genrō material is from the National Diet Library's biographical portal, the Japanese Wikipedia article, and the Yamakawa, Heibonsha and Britannica entries reproduced at Kotobank and Historist, which are in close agreement: the nine members named here; the absence of any constitutional or statutory basis; the rescript of special treatment as men of great merit granted to Kuroda and Itō in 1889 on their respective resignations; the fact that eight of the nine were Satsuma or Chōshū men with only Saionji from the court nobility; and that every Meiji prime minister except Ōkuma was numbered among them. The sequence establishing the practice — the emperor's consultation of Kuroda alone after the fall of the Matsukata cabinet in December 1897, Itō's request for a conference of the elders before forming his third cabinet, the meeting of 10 January 1898, and the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal's phrase recording their attendance — is from the Japanese Wikipedia article, citing Itō Yukio's 2016 study; so is Itō Hirobumi's 1896 memorandum recording his wish to lodge the function of recommending premiers in a strengthened Privy Council and his conclusion that internal conflict there made it impossible for the time being. A technical journal article notes that some genrō received no rescript at all and that the group was a de facto rather than a formal body, and that the elders' conference was convened for some major questions and not for others. The description of an elder statesman as a *kampaku* appears in a Japanese scholarly web essay on Saionji, quoted from a published compilation; the speaker's identity and the exact provenance were not established here, and it is reported as a remark rather than relied upon.

The peerage ordinance of 7 July 1884 is from the National Archives of Japan's chronology entry, which supplies the date, its promulgation as an Imperial Household Ministry directive, the five ranks and their heritability in the male line, and its replacement by an imperial house law in 1907. The drafting under Itō as head of the Bureau for the Investigation of Institutions, and the criteria in the accompanying regulations — including the clause conferring rank for merit to the state at every one of the five levels, and the thresholds of 150,000 and 50,000 *koku* — are from the Japanese Wikipedia articles on the ordinance and on the peerage, which also supply the creation of 427 noble houses in 1869 and the addition of 76 more before 1884. The stated political purpose, that the peerage should form a bulwark of the throne and the mother body of an upper house in view of the coming parliament, is from a Japanese reference site and is the received account in the Japanese literature. The establishment of the House of Peers by imperial ordinance in 1889 is confirmed by the Wikisource text of that ordinance; its composition and powers are not analysed here and belong to Module 9.

The Civil Service Appointment Ordinance amendment of March 1899 is from the National Archives of Japan's chronology entry, which supplies the previous freedom of appointment to imperially appointed posts, the appointment of party members to such posts under the first Ōkuma cabinet, and the second Yamagata cabinet's amendment requiring that imperial appointments other than the highest be made by promotion from officials who had passed the higher civil service examination and served a prescribed term.

The service-minister rule of 1900 is from the Japanese Wikipedia article, the Shōgakukan and Britannica entries at Kotobank, and the Japan Center for Asian Historical Records' teaching glossary, which agree on: its establishment by the second Yamagata cabinet in 1900 restricting the war and navy ministerships to serving generals and lieutenant-generals and their naval equivalents; its stated purpose of preventing party influence reaching the military; the right of direct memorial to the throne on matters of military command without passing through the prime minister, conferred by the cabinet regulations; Uehara Yūsaku's use of that right in 1912 to submit his resignation directly after the two-division demand was refused on grounds of retrenchment; the army's refusal to nominate a successor and the consequent fall of the second Saionji cabinet; the removal of the serving requirement by the first Yamamoto cabinet in 1913; the fact that no reserve or retired officer ever in fact held the post; and the army's decision, on that amendment, to transfer part of the war minister's business to the Chief of the General Staff, which the JACAR glossary describes as institutionally reinforcing the independence of the supreme command. The placing of the general staff outside the war ministry from 1878 is standard chronology and was not separately verified for this module.

The political crisis of 1873 — the decision to send an envoy to Korea, its reversal on the return of the embassy, and the resignation of Saigō, Itagaki, Etō, Gotō and Soejima — is standard chronology; the memorial for a popularly elected assembly of January 1874, the Saga rising of February 1874, the risings of 1876 and the Satsuma rebellion of 1877 rest on the sources cited in Module 1. The characterisation of Saigō's Korea proposal as, among other things, an occupation for the shizoku is this study's reading and is contested in the Japanese literature, where the extent to which Saigō intended war at all remains disputed; it is offered as an argument, not as an established fact.

The founding of the Rikken Seiyūkai by Itō in September 1900 and the electoral qualification of fifteen yen in direct national tax are standard chronology and were not separately verified here; the franchise is treated properly in Module 9 and the figures given there should govern. The characterisation of the Seiyūkai bargain as an exchange of budget support for local public works is the received account in the Japanese and

English literature rather than a finding of this study. The disposal of state enterprises rests on the sources cited in Module 6, and the indemnity allocation on those cited there.

The propositions that a default is broken by the insulated component rather than the disaffected one, that insulation combined with an independent instrument of force constitutes a second sovereign, and that an unarguable apex forces coordination into an informal body that cannot be reformed or succeeded, are this study's own arguments and are offered for testing.

# THE WAY OF SPEECH IS BLOCKED

*Module 9 · Plurality or Foreclosure — a parliament demanded by the losers of a cabinet quarrel and granted by the winner of the next one, a judge who defied the government on nationalist grounds and left the rule of law behind him, and a set of protections whose exact boundary can be read off the subject they refused to cover*

## Where liberties come from

The question this module exists to answer is whether an order's declared freedoms are anything but words, and it approaches the question through the mechanism of their production rather than their statement. The framework's working proposition is that liberties are not generated from below. The person at the bottom cannot compel anything; Module 5 showed exactly how narrow his options were, and how they were narrowed on purpose. What produces a protection is a fight *inside* the hierarchy — a faction with standing and means, bargaining from strength against another faction or against the apex, where neither side wants to destroy the arrangement and a concession is therefore cheaper than a rupture. The faction asks for a privilege, or a shield, or an institution it expects to control. What it gets, if it gets anything, has to be written down; and what is written down survives the quarrel that produced it, and accretes, and is picked up later by people the original bargainers would have been appalled to see holding it.

Meiji Japan documents this mechanism more cleanly than almost any case in this collection, because the fights are dated, the documents survive, and the men involved wrote down their reasons.

## Who asked, and what they had just lost

On the seventeenth of January 1874, eight men submitted to the Chamber of the Left a memorial demanding a popularly elected assembly. It opens:

> 臣等伏シテ方今政権ノ帰スル所ヲ察スルニ、上帝室ニ在ラズ、下人民ニ在ラズ、而独有司ニ帰ス

Your servants, prostrate, consider where the power of government at present resides: it lies not above with the imperial house, nor below with the people, but with the officials alone.

It then describes what follows from that:

> 政令百端、朝出暮改、政刑情実ニ成リ、賞罰愛憎ニ出ヅ、言路壅蔽、困苦告ルナシ

Government orders run to a hundred kinds, issued in the morning and altered by evening; administration and punishment proceed by private connection; reward and penalty issue from favour and dislike; the way of speech is blocked, and there is no means of reporting hardship.

Set that last clause against the fifth of the notice boards posted at every crossroads in Japan in April 1868, which had declared that the way of speech was thrown open and that any man with a proposal for the good of the imperial country might submit it. Six years later, men who had themselves been in the Council of State stated in a public document that the way of speech was blocked. Both were true. The board had opened a channel that ran upward, individually, into an office that could shelve what arrived in it, and Module 5 traced that channel to the end at Ashio.

The remedy the memorial proposes is stated as a syllogism:

> 唯天下ノ公議ヲ張ルニ在ル而已。天下ノ公議ヲ張ルハ民撰議院ヲ立ルニ在ル而已。則有司ノ権限ル所アツテ、而上下其安全幸福ヲ受ル者アラン

It lies only in extending public discussion throughout the realm. To extend public discussion lies only in establishing a popularly elected assembly. Then the officials' power will have a limit, and high and low alike will receive their safety and happiness.

And the ground of the claim:

> 夫人民、政府ニ対シテ租税ヲ払フノ義務アル者ハ、乃チ其政府ノ事ヲ与知可否スルノ権理ヲ有ス

Those among the people who have the duty of paying taxes to the government thereby possess the right to know of and to approve or reject that government's affairs.

That is no taxation without representation, in classical Japanese, three months after the men who wrote it were forced out of office.

Because that is who they were. The signatories were Itagaki Taisuke, Gotō Shōjirō, Etō Shinpei and Soejima Taneomi — four of the five councillors who had resigned in October 1873 when the returning embassy reversed the Korea decision — together

with Yuri Kimimasa, Okamoto Kenzaburō, and the two men who actually drafted the text, Furusawa Shigeru and Komuro Shinobu, both freshly back from study in England. The standard Japanese reference description of the group is that they were centrally men of the former Kōchi and Saga domains who were outside the mainstream of the domain clique.

The demand for representative institutions in Japan was made, in the first instance, by the men who had just lost a factional fight inside the government, five days after they formed the country's first political party, using arguments supplied by two young men who had been reading in London.

And the franchise they proposed was not universal. They asked that the vote be given to the shizoku and to the wealthy farmers and merchants. The document is a demand by an excluded elite to be readmitted, made on a general principle, on behalf of a class.

Two further details belong here. It was published the next day in the *Nisshin shinjishi*, a Tokyo paper run by the Englishman John Reddie Black — which is to say the space in which the founding document of Japanese constitutionalism first circulated was a foreign-owned newspaper, harder to suppress than a Japanese one. And within a month of signing it, Etō Shinpei had raised Saga in arms and was shortly hanged. The same fracture, the same men, two exits.

## The twelfth of October

The concession, when it came seven years later, came out of the next factional fight and was made by the man who won it, on the day he won it.

The government had begun canvassing the question internally in 1879, when Yamagata Aritomo — of all people — submitted a memorial arguing that a national assembly was necessary to settle public feeling. Councillors were asked for their opinions. Itō Hirobumi's argued that constitutional government would eventually be needed, and gave as his reason the revision of the treaties.

In 1881 Ōkuma Shigenobu submitted his, secretly, and it was of a different order: adopt the British system of parliamentary cabinet government, and promulgate a constitution at the beginning of 1883. Itō wanted a Prussian arrangement preserving the monarch's prerogative and a gradual approach. The disagreement was doctrinal and it was also, as the National Diet Library's own account puts it, a struggle for the leadership of the government after Ōkubo's assassination, compounded by an existing quarrel over fiscal policy.

Then, in July, Kuroda Kiyotaka, winding up the Hokkaidō Colonisation Office, arranged to sell the whole of its public property to a company run by men from his

own Satsuma. The scandal broke, the campaign to stop the sale fused with the campaign for a parliament, and Ōkuma — using the newspapers — attacked Kuroda hard and pressed for early opening. Many of the men agitating in public were close to him.

The emperor left in July on a progress through the north and Hokkaidō and Ōkuma went with him. Itō stayed in Tokyo and worked out the settlement. On the eleventh of October the emperor returned. On the twelfth, three things happened together: the sale was cancelled; Ōkuma was dismissed from the government; and an imperial rescript was issued, drafted by Inoue Kowashi, undertaking that a national assembly would be convened in 1890.

That is the transaction. A parliament was promised by the winning faction, on the day it expelled the losing faction, for the purpose of removing from that faction the issue it had been using. The Japanese reference literature says so without embarrassment: the rescript was at once a result of the popular rights movement and a means of splitting it.

And the rescript carried its own reservation. It recited the gradual measures already taken — the Senate, the prefectural assemblies — affirmed that the gradual approach would be maintained, and stated that the organisation and powers of the assembly would be settled by drafts prepared by the government's officials and adjudicated by the emperor himself. The concession included the provision that its terms would be written by the people conceding.

The popular rights movement received the thing it had been demanding for seven years, from men who despised it, as a by-product of a quarrel about who would run the country and a scandal about the sale of state property in Hokkaidō. And it was, in every practical sense, a victory. The movement's leaders had not been able to compel it. Ōkuma, fighting Itō, had made it cheaper to grant than to refuse.

## What arrived

The constitution of 1889 contained a chapter of subjects' rights: liberty of abode and movement, freedom from arrest, trial or punishment except according to law, the right to trial by judges determined by law, inviolability of the dwelling and of correspondence, security of property, freedom of religious belief, and liberty of speech, writing, publication, assembly and association. Every one of them qualified by the formula that has appeared throughout this study — within the limits of law, or except in cases provided by law.

The Diet opened in 1890. Its lower house was elected by men of twenty-five and over who paid fifteen yen or more in direct national taxes: on the usual figures

somewhere around 450,000 people, a little over one per cent of the population. Which is to say, in the main, the certificate-holding landlords of Module 6 — the class the settlement of 1873 had created — and a scattering of urban businessmen.

Its powers were bounded in two ways that mattered. The House of Peers, seated on the peerage that the 1884 ordinance had constructed and expanded for the purpose, held equal legislative power, so nothing the elected chamber passed could become law without it. And if the Diet refused a budget, the previous year's budget stood.

That second provision is usually cited as proof that the Diet was ornamental, and it is not, quite. It meant the Diet could not starve the government. It also meant the Diet could refuse *increases* — and the entire government programme of the 1890s consisted of increases, since the armament expansion could not be paid for out of last year's figures. So the landlord chamber had exactly one weapon, and it was a real one, and it used it through a decade of dissolutions and general elections and budget crises, until the government stopped fighting it and bought it in.

## The judge

The sharpest test of whether the paper rights were more than paper came in 1891, and the way it turned out is the module's central finding.

On the eleventh of May, at Ōtsu, a police constable named Tsuda Sanzō attacked the Tsarevich Nicholas of Russia with his sword and wounded him. The government's alarm was total: Russia was the largest power on Japan's horizon and the treaties still gave every western state consular jurisdiction over its own nationals on Japanese soil.

Before the visit, the Russian minister Shevich had asked the Foreign Minister, Aoki Shūzō, for an emergency ordinance punishing disrespect to the Tsarevich. Aoki had instead undertaken — privately, and without publishing it — that the criminal code's provisions on the imperial family would be applied by analogy. So the government was bound by a secret undertaking to a foreign power.

Article 116 of the criminal code then in force prescribed death for causing harm to the emperor, the three empresses or the crown prince. The cabinet pressed the judiciary to apply it. Itō contemplated martial law; Aoki proposed an emergency ordinance extending the article to foreign royalty. Neither was done.

Kojima Iken had been appointed President of the Great Court of Cassation six days before the attack. The government informed him of the Aoki–Shevich understanding. He took the position that no penalty may be imposed that the statute does not provide, and he persuaded the judges sitting in the special bench convened at Ōtsu to try the case as an ordinary attempted murder. On the twenty-seventh of May they sentenced Tsuda to penal servitude for life.

This is celebrated in Japan as the founding of judicial independence, and the celebration is deserved: a cabinet demanded a man's life for reasons of state, from a court, and did not get it, and no cabinet afterwards tried it in quite that way again.

Now the two complications, which the Japanese reference literature states plainly and which this study will not soften.

The first is that Kojima's own act was itself an interference with a trial. He was not a member of the bench that heard the case. He was the administrative superior of the judges who were. He used that position to persuade them of his own interpretation of the law. The precedent for judicial independence was established by the President of the high court leaning on his subordinates — which is exactly the thing judicial independence exists to prevent.

The second is his motive. Kojima was not a liberal. He resisted the government from a nationalist position, regarding its conduct toward Russia as feeble. He was defending Japanese sovereignty against a cabinet he thought was grovelling to a foreign power, and the principle of legality was the instrument to hand.

So the foundational precedent of the rule of law in modern Japan was laid by a nationalist judge, committing a procedural impropriety, in order to defeat his own government's foreign policy.

And it held. The precedent outlived the man, the quarrel and the motive, and became a tradition of the Japanese courts.

## What the protections would not cover

The trajectory after 1890 is genuinely mixed and the mixture is the point.

Real things happened. In March 1897 the Home Minister's power to suspend and prohibit newspapers without a court was abolished. In 1900 the tax qualification for the vote was halved to ten yen, roughly doubling the electorate to something over two per cent of the population; it was cut to three yen in 1919 and abolished for men in 1925. The Diet survived every attempt to work around it and by 1918 produced a prime minister from the majority party. The courts kept the independence Kojima had improvised.

And in the same years: the Public Peace Police Law of 1900 forbade workers and tenant farmers to combine, and barred women outright from joining a political society or even attending a political meeting. The treason article of 1908 provided death alone, with no appeal, tried at a single instance in a closed court, and in 1911 twelve people were hanged under it in a case now accepted to have been substantially fabricated. Universal male suffrage in 1925 arrived in the same session as the Peace Preservation Law.

Which gives the boundary, and the boundary is legible.

In 1891 the government wanted a death sentence and the courts refused it, and the subject was a Russian prince. In 1911 the government wanted twenty-four death sentences and got them, and the subject was the emperor. Where the throne was not involved, the ordinary law held against the cabinet, and a man's life was saved by it. Where the throne was involved, there was no procedure at all: no appeal, no open court, no lesser penalty available, no defence that the plan was inchoate.

The protections of the Meiji constitution were real, and they were bounded, and the boundary ran exactly around the axis that Itō had told the Privy Council in 1888 was the only one available.

## Reading liberty against the framework

Three findings, of which the second is the module's contribution and the third is the one this framework should carry furthest.

**First, the mechanism held without a single exception in this case.** Every protection that came into existence in Meiji Japan can be traced to a fight between factions inside the hierarchy, and in each instance the record states the factional origin openly. The demand for a parliament was made in January 1874 by four men who had been forced out of the Council of State in October 1873, drafting on a principle supplied by two students returned from London, and asking the vote for their own class. The promise of a parliament was granted on the twelfth of October 1881 by the faction that had just dismissed Ōkuma, in order to take away the issue Ōkuma had been using, and simultaneously to split the movement. The independence of the judiciary was established in May 1891 by a nationalist judge overriding his government's foreign policy. Not one of these was a concession to the ruled. The ruled appear in the story as the people whose agitation raised the price of refusal, which is a real contribution and is not the same thing as a demand being granted.

**Second — and this is the mechanism by which self-interested quarrels leave liberty behind.** A faction fighting inside a hierarchy cannot state its claim in the form it actually holds it. Itagaki could not petition for an assembly on the ground that he personally had been excluded from office and wanted back in; he had to say that those who pay taxes have a right to know of the government's affairs. Kojima could not refuse the cabinet on the ground that he thought its Russia policy contemptible; he had to say that no penalty may be imposed which the statute does not provide. In each case the claim had to be *general* in order to be a claim at all, because a demand stated in purely private terms is not an argument but a request.

And the generality is what survives. The faction's interest is spent when the quarrel ends. The sentence remains in circulation, and can be picked up by anyone. Itagaki's principle, written for shizoku and wealthy farmers, was in the hands of tenant farmers within a generation and of women within two. Kojima's principle, deployed to be tough on Russia, protected defendants he would have despised.

So the framework should carry this as the engine of the residue. **A faction bargaining inside a hierarchy must convert its private interest into a general principle in order to make it arguable, and it is the generality — not the interest, and not the outcome of the particular quarrel — that outlives the fight and accretes.** This is why liberties can be real without anybody in the transaction having intended liberty, and why the search for a liberal motive behind a liberal institution so often comes up empty.

**Third, a test that this collection can apply anywhere.** The way to tell whether a declared protection is more than words is not to read the clause. Every order's clauses read well. It is to find the subject matter on which the protections do not operate, because the exemption is drawn with precision and it maps something the order cannot afford to expose.

In Meiji Japan the courts defeated the cabinet over a Russian prince and could not be reached at all over the emperor. Assembly and association were protected within the limits of law, and the law forbade workers and tenants to combine and forbade women to be in the room. Speech was protected, and the sacred and inviolable person was outside the range of anything that could be said.

**Find the subject on which an order's protections are suspended, and you have found the load-bearing member of its robe.** The exemption is the map. It is stated in the statutes, which have to be specific in order to function, and it is therefore more reliable than any account of what the order believed about itself. Module 3 established that this order's axis was the throne, on the authority of Itō stating it in a closed session; this module reaches the same conclusion from the opposite direction, out of the schedule of what the courts would and would not protect, and the two agree exactly.

## A note on sources.

The memorial of 17 January 1874 is quoted from the Japanese Wikisource text, checked against a second transcription which agrees throughout and supplies readings; the translation is this study's own. The National Diet Library's exhibition on modern Japan confirms the date, the submission to the Chamber of the Left, the publication the following day in the *Nisshin shinjishi* edited by John Reddie Black, and that the original fair copy is held by the National Archives of Japan; it also supplies the

founding of the Aikoku Kōtō on 12 January 1874 and the party's disappearance within months. The eight signatories, the drafting by Furusawa Shigeru and Komuro Shinobu on their return from England, the characterisation of the group as centrally men of the former Kōchi and Saga domains outside the mainstream of the domain clique, and the demand that the franchise be given to shizoku and to wealthy farmers and merchants, are from the Shōgakukan and Yamakawa entries reproduced at Kotobank; those entries also record that both the government and the Meirokusha opposed the memorial as premature.

The 1881 sequence is from the National Archives of Japan's chronology entry and exhibition note on the Hokkaidō disposal, the National Diet Library's exhibition on the making of the constitution, and the Japanese Wikipedia article on the rescript, which are consistent: Yamagata's 1879 memorial arguing that a national assembly was needed to settle public feeling and the subsequent canvass of councillors' opinions; Itō's opinion citing treaty revision; Ōkuma's secret memorial of 1881 urging British-style parliamentary government and a constitution at the beginning of 1883; the disposal of the Colonisation Office's property in July 1881 to a company of Satsuma men and the resulting fusion of the anti-sale campaign with the parliament campaign; Ōkuma's use of the press against Kuroda; the emperor's absence on progress with Ōkuma in attendance and Itō's work in Tokyo; the emperor's return on 11 October and the issue of the rescript on the 12th together with the cancellation of the sale and Ōkuma's dismissal; the drafting by Inoue Kowashi and countersignature by Sanjō Sanetomi; and the rescript's recital of the Senate and the prefectural assemblies, its affirmation of gradualism, and its statement that the assembly's organisation and powers would be settled by officials' drafts adjudicated by the emperor. The judgement that the rescript was simultaneously a fruit of the popular rights movement and a means of splitting it is quoted in substance from a Japanese reference site and is the received account in the Japanese literature rather than a finding of this study. The National Diet Library entry is the source for the reading of the quarrel as a struggle for leadership after Ōkubo's assassination compounded by a dispute over fiscal policy.

The Ōtsu case is paraphrased from the *Kokushi daijiten* and *Nihon dai-hyakka* entries summarised at JapanKnowledge and Kotobank, the Kotobank entry on Kojima Iken, and Ōtsu City Museum of History's dictionary entry, which agree on: the attack of 11 May 1891; Shevich's pre-visit request for an emergency ordinance and Aoki's private undertaking, not made public, that the criminal code's imperial-family provisions would be applied by analogy; the government's consequent pressure for the application of article 116, which prescribed death for harm to the emperor, the three empresses or the crown prince; Itō's contemplation of martial law and Aoki's proposal

of an emergency ordinance, neither executed; Kojima's appointment as President of the Great Court of Cassation six days before the incident; his being informed of the Aoki–Shevich understanding; his persuasion of the judges of the special bench at Ōtsu to apply ordinary attempted murder rather than article 116, on the principle that no penalty may be imposed which the law does not provide; and the sentence of life penal servitude on 27 May. The two complications — that Kojima, as administrative superior of the judges and not a member of the bench, was himself interfering with the trial, and that he resisted the government from a nationalist position regarding its conduct as feeble — are stated in those terms in the *Kokushi daijiten* entry and are adopted here. Kojima's resignation in 1892 over the judges' gambling affair is from the Kotobank entry.

The rights chapter of the 1889 constitution is summarised rather than quoted, on the same basis as in Modules 3 and 7: the article texts were not verified against a primary source in preparing this module, and the summary follows the standard descriptions. The electoral qualification of fifteen yen in direct national tax for men of twenty-five and over is confirmed by several of the sources cited above; the resulting electorate of roughly 450,000 and a little over one per cent of the population, and the subsequent reductions to ten yen in 1900, three yen in 1919 and universal male suffrage in 1925, are standard chronology and were not separately verified here, and the voter numbers in particular should be checked before being relied upon. The provision permitting the previous year's budget to stand if the Diet refused a new one, and the equal legislative power of the House of Peers, are likewise standard and not separately verified; the peerage ordinance and House of Peers ordinance rest on the sources cited in Module 8.

The abolition of the Home Minister's suspension power in March 1897 rests on the sources cited in Module 7, as do the treason article and the 1911 executions; the Public Peace Police Law and its exclusions rest on those cited in Module 5. The Peace Preservation Law of 1925 is standard chronology. The private constitutional drafts produced by the popular rights movement in the 1880s are referred to only in passing and no specific draft is cited, none having been verified for this module.

The proposition that a faction must convert its interest into a general principle in order to make it arguable, and that the generality rather than the interest is what accretes as residue, and the proposition that the subject matter exempted from an order's protections identifies the load-bearing member of its robe, are this study's own arguments and are offered for testing.

# A PARAPET OF THE THRONE

*Module 10 · Change and Collapse — a rising of tens of thousands that produced martial law and a change of prime minister, the same crowd eight years later that brought a government down in fifty-three days, and the single variable between them*

## The proposition, and why this case can test it

The framework's account of change is unpopular and it is close to a theorem. A durable order is an armed settlement, and an armed settlement is alterable only by those who command organised force. The common man commands none. A rising against an intact floor is therefore crushed, with a regularity that approaches a law. Structural change comes only when the floor cracks, and it cracks in four ways: the elite fractures and one faction arms the people against the other; the elite exhausts itself in great-power war and must pay the survivors; the elite is conquered by a rival elite and remade at bayonet-point; or the elite overbreeds, seating fewer claimants than it produces, until its surplus turns revolutionary and leads the crowd as fuel.

The framework also holds the honest objection against itself: that although the common man is never the proximate agent, his pressure is a real cause, because it raises the standing cost of the settlement and shapes what a cornered faction must concede. The weight on the lever is real. The lever is worked above.

Meiji Japan is a good place to test this, and for an unusual reason. It supplies something close to a controlled comparison. Twice within eight years, in the same city, the same kind of crowd rose over the same grievance and used the same tactics. In one case the elite was united and in the other it had fractured. The outcomes differ exactly as the framework predicts, and the difference is large.

## The record of risings

Take first the whole record of what the ruled attempted between 1868 and 1911, which the preceding modules have assembled.

The blood-tax risings of 1873, across western Japan, at their largest in Mimasaka: suppressed within days. The land tax rising in Ise in December 1876, spreading through four prefectures, the largest disturbance of the era with 50,773 people afterwards punished: suppressed in three days by police, hired shizoku levies and garrison troops, and it won half a percentage point off the tax rate. The Poor People's

Army in Chichibu in 1884, which held a mountain district for a fortnight and asked for its debts rescheduled and its schools closed: destroyed by police, army and gendarmerie. The Ashio villagers walking to Tokyo in February 1900 to petition: stopped by police at Kawamata with bloodshed and mass arrest, and their village subsequently expropriated and demolished. The socialists in 1910, who had not risen at all: twelve hanged.

Not one of these touched the arrangement. Every one met a working floor and lost. The one measurable concession in the whole series — the reduction of the land tax from three per cent to two and a half in January 1877 — came because Ōkubo had already decided to offer it and because the Satsuma rebellion was six weeks away, which is to say because the elite was about to fracture, not because the peasants of Ise had won.

## Hibiya

The largest of them, and the cleanest test, came in 1905.

Japan had won the war with Russia at a cost of some 1.1 million men mobilised and over 200,000 casualties, financed by heavy taxation and by foreign borrowing, and the country had been told for eighteen months that it was winning without being told that it could not continue. The peace signed at Portsmouth in September brought no indemnity. Against a war whose casualties and cost dwarfed the war with China, which had produced 360 million yen, the treaty produced nothing.

On the fifth of September nine hard-line organisations, under the name of a joint committee on the peace question, called a national rally in Hibiya Park. The government banned it and closed the park and put police on the gates. The rally was held anyway. Afterwards the crowd ignored the dispersal order, broke the gates of the Home Minister's official residence, attacked the offices of the pro-government *Kokumin shinbun*, and burned more than half the police boxes in the city. The rioting continued the next day. Prime Minister Katsura declared martial law over Tokyo and five surrounding districts, put troops into the streets including the Imperial Guard division, and suspended newspapers and magazines until the twenty-eighth of November.

Seventeen dead. About five hundred injured. Two thousand detained; three hundred and seventy prosecuted for riotous assembly; seventy-eight convicted. The disorder spread over the following month to Yokohama, Nagoya, Osaka and Kobe.

Two things about it belong in this module and not in an account of popular feeling.

The first is who called it. Not workers, not a union, not a peasant league. The organisers were Kōno Hironaka, a member of the Diet for the Kenseihontō; Tōyama

Mitsuru, the nationalist; Kanmuri Tomotsune and Sassa Tomofusa; and the societies of the hard foreign-policy right. It was a counter-elite operation, and the crowd was what it brought with it — the framework's fuel, exactly. Kōno went to prison and was acquitted the following year, which is roughly what happens to a member of the elite and is not what happened to the Chichibu farmers.

The second is what it produced. Four months later, in January 1906, the first Katsura cabinet resigned and the first Saionji cabinet was formed. Both men were on the list of nine. Both were selected by the same body that had selected every prime minister since 1889. And the two of them then alternated in the premiership for the next eight years, in what Japanese historiography names after them as a period rather than as a crisis.

That is the result of the largest urban rising in Meiji Japan: martial law, the Imperial Guard in the streets, seventeen dead, a press blackout of nearly three months, and a rotation inside the same nine-man selection system. The floor did not crack. It was not close to cracking.

## Where the changes actually came from

Now set beside that the list of things that did change, which the preceding modules established with dates.

October 1873: the councillors split over Korea and half of them resign. Out of that fracture come the memorial for a popularly elected assembly in January 1874 — the beginning of the movement that eventually produced a parliament — and the Saga, Kumamoto, Akizuki, Hagi and Satsuma risings, which produced the destruction of the shizoku as a political force.

October 1881: Itō defeats Ōkuma over the form of the constitution and the Hokkaidō scandal, and on the day Ōkuma is dismissed a rescript promises a parliament by 1890. Every subsequent constitutional development in Japan runs through that document.

1889 and 1890: a constitution written by the winning faction and a Diet elected by one per cent of the population.

September 1900: Itō founds a party and takes the landlords inside the arrangement, ending a decade of budget warfare.

December 1912: the army withholds a war minister and a cabinet falls.

Five structural changes in forty-four years, and every one of them a quarrel between men who held office, or had held it, or expected to. The ruled appear in this list only as the weight one side or the other could swing, and in the first four they do not appear as decisive at all.

## What the Restoration itself was

The point can be pressed back further, because the founding of this order is the framework's own case.

The 1860s were a period of extraordinary popular disturbance in Japan — world-renewal risings across the countryside, and the strange mass carnival that swept the Tōkaidō in 1867. None of it brought down the shogunate. What brought down the shogunate was that a set of armed principalities, under external shock, stopped obeying, and that when the Tokugawa mobilised against Chōshū in 1866 half the coalition would not march. The floor cracked between armed houses and the crowd walked into the gap.

And the men who came through the gap were the surplus. The Landscape module established what they were: the lower and middling ranks of the warrior class, formed as fighters, forbidden by law to take any other occupation, paid in a fixed measure of rice whose purchasing power had been falling for two centuries, and bred in numbers the settlement had never had positions for. That is elite overproduction described from the inside — an order manufacturing more claimants than it can seat, until the unseated turn on it. Itō Hirobumi was the adopted son of an *ashigaru*, the lowest rank of the warrior class. He ended as the first prime minister of Japan and a prince of the realm.

So the Meiji leadership was the Tokugawa order's counter-elite, and the fourth crack made the first one possible.

## The control

Return now to the crowd, eight years after Hibiya.

In December 1912 the second Saionji cabinet fell because the army refused to supply a war minister. The elder statesmen then installed Katsura Tarō — who was at that moment Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal and Grand Chamberlain. A court officer walked across into the premiership, and the transfer was read at once as what it was: the domain clique using a new and inexperienced emperor to keep the government in its own hands, in breach of the boundary between the court and the government.

The Seiyūkai broke off the alliance with Katsura's faction that had held since 1900 and joined the movement to protect constitutional government, allying with Inukai's Kokumintō. On the twenty-seventh of December opposition members, journalists and academics met to carry the movement into the provinces. Through January it went national, and the merchants and townspeople still labouring under the post-war taxation joined it in numbers.

Katsura did not do what every government since 1900 had done, which was to compromise with the Seiyūkai. He prorogued the Diet repeatedly and set about forming a party of his own. And he obtained from the new emperor a rescript directing Saionji to restrain the Seiyūkai.

On the fifth of February 1913, with tens of thousands of people surrounding the Diet building, Ozaki Yukio rose to move the impeachment of the government:

> 彼等ハ常ニ口ヲ開ケバ直チニ忠愛ヲ唱ヘ、恰モ忠君愛国ハ自分ノ一手専売ノ如ク唱ヘテアリマスルガ、其為ストコロヲ見レバ、常ニ玉座ノ蔭ニ隠レテ政敵ヲ狙撃スルガ如キ挙動ヲ執テ居ルノデアル。彼等ハ玉座ヲ以テ胸壁トナシ、詔勅ヲ以テ弾丸ニ代ヘテ政敵ヲ倒サントスルモノデハナイカ

Whenever they open their mouths they proclaim loyalty and devotion, as though loyalty to the sovereign and love of country were their own sole monopoly. But look at what they do, and they are always to be found behind the throne, taking aim at their political opponents from cover. Do they not make of the throne a parapet, and of imperial rescripts their bullets, and so seek to bring down the men who oppose them?

Five days later, on the tenth of February, with the crowd around the building, Katsura resigned. His cabinet had lasted fifty-three days. There was rioting again — police stations and pro-government newspaper offices burned, as in 1905 — and this time it was not suppressed with the Imperial Guard, because this time the government did not survive to suppress anything. Yamamoto Gonbee formed a cabinet with Seiyūkai support and, in 1913, struck the word *serving* out of the qualification for the service ministers.

## The single variable

Set the two events side by side.

Tokyo. A mass crowd. A grievance rooted in the taxation left by a war. Rallies, then attacks on police stations and on the newspapers that supported the government. Leadership drawn from parties and from the organised political nation rather than from the crowd itself. Eight years apart.

In September 1905 the government declared martial law, brought in the Imperial Guard, killed seventeen people, arrested two thousand, suspended the press for eleven weeks, and four months later handed the premiership to another member of the same nine-man body, which then ran the country for eight further years without structural alteration.

In February 1913 the government fell in fifty-three days and the mechanism that had produced the crisis was amended within the year.

The variable is not the crowd, which was substantially the same in both, nor its grievance, nor its size, nor its violence. The variable is whether the elite was divided. In 1905 it was not: the army was content, the Seiyūkai was in alliance with Katsura, the elder statesmen were agreed, and the crowd met an intact floor. In 1912 the army had already broken a cabinet on its own account, the Seiyūkai had abandoned the alliance, and the boundary between the court and the government had been visibly breached — and into that gap the same crowd walked, and its weight decided the outcome.

That is as close to a controlled experiment as this collection is likely to find, and it produces the framework's proposition and the framework's own objection to it at the same time. The crowd was never the proximate agent: in 1913 it was the army's refusal and the Seiyūkai's defection that made the government fall, and the crowd was what the defecting faction swung. But the crowd was not nothing, because Katsura resigned with it around the building rather than with the Diet merely voting, and because the cost of the Russo-Japanese war settlement had been made legible in 1905 by people who lost, and was still legible in 1913 to people who did not.

## What this order was built to be killed by

One further observation, and it takes the module past 1912 for the sake of the argument.

By the end of the Meiji period this arrangement had made itself remarkably resistant to two of the four cracks. Fracture it repaired, and Module 8 showed the two repair modes: destroy the fracturing group where it has no lever inside the arrangement, as the shizoku were destroyed between 1874 and 1877; or buy it in where it has one, as the landlords were bought in through the Seiyūkai in 1900. Overproduction it deferred, by expanding the state, the school system, the army and then the empire fast enough to seat its graduates for a generation.

That left the other two cracks, and it had, by 1900, placed the decision that produces both of them — the decision to make war — inside the one component whose position did not depend on the arrangement's survival. The army held a veto over cabinet formation, a channel to the throne that bypassed the cabinet, and a sphere of command declared constitutionally beyond review.

The Meiji settlement's actual end came in 1945 by exhaustion in great-power war followed by conquest, which is cracks two and three arriving together, and the most complete structural change in modern Japanese social history followed immediately: the land reform of 1947, which dismantled in three years the landlord order that the

certificates of 1873 had created and that had survived every rising, every tenancy dispute and every party programme of the preceding seventy years.

It was done by a foreign army. The tenants who had lived under it for three generations did not do it, and had never been able to.

## Reading change against the framework

Three findings, of which the first is the module's contribution.

**Meiji Japan supplies a near-controlled comparison for the framework's central thesis, and the thesis survives it.** Hibiya in September 1905 and the constitutional protection movement of February 1913 hold nearly everything constant — city, crowd, grievance, tactics, counter-elite leadership — and vary one thing: whether the elite above the crowd was united. With the elite united, a rising of tens of thousands produced seventeen dead, martial law, and a rotation inside the same selection body. With the elite divided, a comparable crowd produced the fall of a government in fifty-three days and a structural amendment within the year. The framework should carry this pair as a worked instance, because paired cases with a single varying condition are rare in this material and this one is unusually clean.

**Second, a refinement to the fracture crack.** The framework treats elite fracture as a route to structural change. Meiji shows that most fractures produce no structural change at all, because a competent order repairs them, and that there are exactly two repair modes: **destroy the fracturing group, where it holds no lever inside the arrangement; buy it in, where it does.** The shizoku fractured in 1873 with arms and prestige and nothing the government needed, and were destroyed. The landlords fractured through the 1890s with a budget veto the government did need, and were bought. It follows that **an elite fracture produces structural change only where the fracturing group can be neither destroyed nor bought** — and the army in 1912 was precisely that group, too strong to destroy and already holding everything, so that there was nothing left to offer it. That is why 1912 moved the structure and 1877, which was a far bloodier fracture, did not.

**Third, on mortality.** An order that closes off some of the four cracks does not become safe. It concentrates its mortality in the ones it leaves open, and it can be read for which. This one closed fracture by repair and deferred overproduction by expansion, leaving exhaustion and conquest — and then handed the decision that produces exhaustion and invites conquest to the single component that did not need the arrangement and could not be bargained with. **The question to ask of a well-built order is not whether it is stable but which of its four exits it has left unguarded, and whether it has placed the key to that exit inside a component it cannot**

**control.** The Meiji arrangement was, on almost every measure this framework applies, one of the best-constructed orders in the collection. It died of the one thing it had built itself unable to prevent.

And Ozaki's sentence, delivered on the floor of the Diet with the crowd outside, is the last word this module needs on the robe. Itō had told the Privy Council in 1888 that the imperial house was the only axis available and that he had drafted the constitution to leave the sovereign's authority as unbound as possible. Twenty-five years later a member of the elected chamber described what that instrument had become in the hands of the men who held it: a parapet to shoot from, and rescripts for ammunition. He was not attacking the throne. He was describing, accurately and in public, the use to which an unarguable apex is inevitably put by whoever stands nearest to it.

## A note on sources.

The Hibiya riot is paraphrased from the Britannica, Yamakawa and Shōgakukan entries reproduced at Kotobank and Historist, which are in close agreement and supply: the calling of the rally on 5 September 1905 by nine hard-line organisations under the name of a joint committee on the peace question, with Kōno Hironaka of the Kenseihontō, Tōyama Mitsuru, Kanmuri Tomotsune and Sassa Tomofusa named as leaders; the government's ban and closure of the park; the crowd's defiance of the dispersal order, the attack on the Home Minister's residence and on the *Kokumin shinbun*, and the burning of more than half the police boxes in the city; the declaration of martial law over Tokyo and five surrounding districts and the deployment of troops; the suspension of newspapers and magazines until 28 November; the casualties of 17 dead, about 500 injured and 2,000 detained, with 370 prosecuted for riotous assembly and 78 convicted; Kōno's imprisonment and acquittal the following year; and the spread of disorder to Yokohama, Nagoya, Osaka and Kobe over the following month. The use of the Imperial Guard division and the resignation of the first Katsura cabinet in January 1906 followed by the formation of the first Saionji cabinet are from a Japanese encyclopaedic site and a Japanese history reference site respectively; the mobilisation of about 1.1 million men and casualties exceeding 200,000 in the Russo-Japanese war are from a Japanese history teaching site and are given as the received figures.

The 1912–13 crisis is paraphrased from the Shōgakukan entry at Kotobank and the Japanese Wikipedia article on the Taishō political crisis, which agree on: the fall of the second Saionji cabinet in December 1912 following Uehara's resignation and the army's refusal to nominate a successor; the elder statesmen's installation of Katsura,

then Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal and Grand Chamberlain, and the reading of that transfer as a breach of the boundary between court and government and as the domain clique monopolising power behind a new emperor; the Seiyūkai's abandonment of its alliance with Katsura's faction and its entry into the movement to protect constitutional government in alliance with Inukai's Kokumintō; the meeting of 27 December 1912 at which opposition members, journalists and academics resolved to carry the movement into the provinces; the spread of the movement through January 1913 and the participation of merchants and urban populations burdened by post-war taxation; Katsura's refusal of the customary compromise with the Seiyūkai, his repeated prorogations, and his attempt to form the Rikken Dōshikai; his isolation; and his resignation on 10 February with the crowd surrounding the Diet. The duration of fifty-three days and the leadership of Ozaki Yukio and Inukai Tsuyoshi are from a Japanese history teaching blog and a Japanese teaching site, which also record the obtaining of an imperial rescript and the burning of police stations and government-aligned newspaper offices. Ozaki's speech of 5 February 1913 is quoted from a Japanese historical site that reproduces the passage; the transcription has not been checked against the Diet record and the orthography here follows that reproduction with the reading marks normalised. The translation is this study's own. The amendment of the service-minister qualification by the first Yamamoto cabinet in 1913 rests on the sources cited in Module 8.

The record of suppressed risings — the blood-tax risings of 1873, the Ise rising of 1876 with 50,773 punished, the Chichibu rising of 1884, the Kawamata clash of February 1900, and the treason executions of 1911 — rests entirely on the sources cited in Modules 1, 2, 5 and 7 and is not separately sourced here; so does the reduction of the land tax in January 1877 and Ōkubo's prior decision to offer it. The account of the shizoku fractures of 1873 to 1877, the political crisis of 1881, the Seiyūkai bargain of 1900, and the army's action of December 1912 rests on Modules 1, 8 and 9. The characterisation of the late-Tokugawa warrior surplus rests on the Landscape module and on the preceding Tokugawa study in this series; the world-renewal risings of the 1860s and the 1867 carnival are referred to from that study and were not separately researched for this module. Itō Hirobumi's origin as the adopted son of a foot soldier is standard biography and was not separately verified here.

The land reform of 1947 is mentioned as the terminus of the settlement examined in Module 2 and rests on the Japanese reference material cited there, which records that tenant rents were converted from payment in kind by the post-war agricultural land reform; no separate research on the occupation period was undertaken for this module and none of its detail is asserted beyond that.

The theoretical account of the four cracks, of the counter-elite that leads the crowd, of the common man as fuel rather than spark, and of the pressure from below as the weight on a lever worked above, is drawn from *Elite Chaos* in this collection and is not original here; the scholarship it rests on — Skocpol on state breakdown, Goldstone and Turchin on elite overproduction, Acemoglu and Robinson on the franchise as credible commitment — is credited there and is not independently engaged in this module. The proposition that a fracture produces structural change only where the fracturing group can be neither destroyed nor bought, and the proposition that an order which closes some of the four cracks concentrates its mortality in those it leaves open, are this study's own arguments and are offered for testing. The reading of Hibiya and the 1913 crisis as a near-controlled pair is likewise this study's, and the strength of the comparison should be weighed against the differences it sets aside — a different emperor, a different party configuration, and a war eight years further in the past.

# SCARCELY PARALLELED, EAST OR WEST

*Module 11 · The Grim Accounting — a founding so cheap in blood that there was little to forget, a metabolic note that was never called, and twenty-seven thousand men killed by an institution that could not be corrected*

## Two ledgers and a forgetting

This module keeps two accounts and watches a third thing happen.

The first account is the sword: the people killed in establishing the arrangement, in holding it, and in extending it, counted as honestly as the sources allow and with the contested figures given as ranges rather than resolved.

The second is the metabolic. A dense, coordinated agrarian civilisation lifts its population above the land's natural carrying capacity by organisation — irrigation, storage, distribution, registration, the movement of grain from surplus to deficit. When a conquest or a revolution breaks that coordination, the note is called, and it is paid not in battle deaths but in famine and epidemic, often years later and often larger than the fighting. Whether it applies has to be tested, not assumed.

And the third is the forgetting: that when enough time passes and an arrangement settles into being simply the way the world is, the violence that made it stops being visible even to the people living inside it.

Meiji Japan produces an unusual result on all three, and the unusualness is the module's finding.

## The note that was never called

Begin with the metabolic ledger, because the answer is negative and the negative answer is important.

There is no Meiji famine. There is no demographic collapse, no epidemic wave attributable to the transition, no interruption of the planting and harvest cycle across the country, and no year in which the population of Japan is smaller than the year before because of what happened in 1868. The population moved from somewhere between 33 and 35 million at the first modern count in 1872 to around 50 million by the end of the period, growing continuously throughout — through the Boshin War,

through the abolition of the domains, through the land tax reform, through the Matsukata deflation, through two foreign wars.

The reason is the finding the Landscape module reached, and it is worth restating in this register because it is what the metabolic ledger is actually measuring.

Nothing was broken. The fighting of 1868 to 1869 was short, professional and geographically confined; Edo changed hands without a shot; the granaries, the irrigation works, the village registers, the corporate tax-collecting villages and the merchant networks that moved rice from surplus provinces to deficit ones all passed from one set of hands to another intact. The founding transaction was an assumption of liabilities, not a taking. And the coordination that holds a population of thirty-three million people above what the archipelago's arable would otherwise support was, at no point, interrupted.

Which yields a general result. **The metabolic ledger tracks the disruption of coordination, not the change of rulers.** An order can replace its apex, its legal system, its tax system, its status order, its currency, its calendar, its armed forces and every man in its government, and incur no metabolic debt whatever, provided the machinery that feeds people keeps running through the transition. Meiji Japan is close to the pure case of that, because the change of everything else was so total and the change to the agricultural apparatus so nearly nil.

That is the good news in this module, and it is the last of it.

## The sword at home

The internal ledger for forty-four years, assembled from the preceding modules.

The Boshin War: on the most commonly cited reckoning 8,420 dead, with estimates running above ten thousand when deaths from wounds, camp disease and the execution of prisoners are included. Aizu alone accounts for 2,557 of them, including 194 women.

The shizoku risings: Saga in 1874, Kumamoto, Akizuki and Hagi in 1876, and Satsuma from February to September 1877, in which something over ninety thousand men were engaged and casualties exceeded thirty thousand, with government dead of roughly six to seven thousand, seventy per cent of them in Kumamoto prefecture. Etō Shinpei was hanged. Saigō died at Shiroyama.

The risings of the ruled: the blood-tax risings of 1873; the land tax rising in Ise in December 1876, after which 50,773 people were punished; Chichibu in 1884; Kawamata in 1900. These were not, in the main, lethal on any scale — they were punitive, and the punishment fell as prosecutions, fines and imprisonment rather than as bodies.

The religious deportations: 3,394 people of the Urakami community exiled across the country, of whom 662 died in the places they were sent.

The executions: the twelve hanged in January 1911 under a treason article that permitted no other sentence, in a case now accepted to have been largely fabricated.

The riot: seventeen dead at Hibiya in September 1905, with five hundred injured and two thousand detained.

Set against the standards of this collection, that is a low internal count for a founding and forty-four years of rule over thirty-five to fifty million people. It is a fraction of what the French took in Algeria, or the Spanish in Peru, or what the Tokugawa themselves had spent establishing the order this one replaced.

## The sword abroad

The count is not low. It is simply somewhere else.

In 1894 and 1895 Japan fought China. In 1895 it took Taiwan, landing at Aoteh in May with a force of some forty-nine thousand including the Imperial Guard division against a Taiwanese defence of perhaps thirty-three thousand regulars and a hundred thousand militia. The Governor-General reported the island wholly pacified in November. Guerrilla resistance began again within six weeks and continued for seven years, until the last commander was taken and killed in May 1902. In 1898 the administration promulgated a bandit punishment ordinance under which the prescribed penalty for a wide range of acts — resisting officials or troops, robbery, arson, damage to railways or telegraphs — was death, with retrospective effect, and applying alike to ringleaders, instigators and followers.

The Taiwanese figures are heavily contested and this study will not pretend otherwise. Chinese-language sources put the killing in the Yunlin reprisals of 1896 at somewhere between six thousand and thirty thousand, a range of fivefold; one widely circulated Chinese account states that thirty-two thousand people were executed under the bandit punishment ordinance in the first five years of its rigorous application, which would be over one per cent of the population of Taiwan, and this study has not been able to verify it against Japanese administrative records. A Chinese-language compilation gives at least 1,988 Japanese soldiers, police and officials killed by the resistance. What is not in dispute is that the conquest and pacification of Taiwan cost, on any reckoning, more Taiwanese lives than the whole of the Meiji government's internal violence in Japan cost Japanese ones.

In 1900 Japan sent troops to China with the intervention against the Boxers. In 1904 and 1905 it fought Russia. The army's own medical history of that war records 999,868 men mobilised outside Japan, 46,423 killed in action, 153,623 wounded, and

251,185 hospitalised in the theatre of operations, with a further 37,200-odd dying of wounds and sickness. Korea, taken as a protectorate in 1905 and annexed in 1910, was pacified with a campaign against the Righteous Armies whose toll this study has not attempted to establish and does not assert.

The direction of the whole account is unmistakable. This order was extraordinarily sparing of violence against its own population and not sparing at all beyond its own coastline, and the second fact is not a departure from the first but its condition: the internal settlement of Modules 2 and 8 held so well precisely because there was somewhere else for the state's coercive energy and its surplus men to go.

## Twenty-seven thousand four hundred and sixty-eight

And now the largest single item in the Meiji accounting, which appears in no casualty list of any war, because the men who died of it were killed by their own army's opinion.

Beriberi had been endemic in Japan since polished white rice displaced brown, and by the Meiji period it was killing somewhere between ten and thirty thousand people a year. In the services, where everyone ate the same ration, it was catastrophic.

Takaki Kanehiro, a navy surgeon who had studied in Britain, noticed that the Royal Navy did not have it, investigated the pattern of outbreaks in the Japanese fleet, and concluded that beriberi appeared where the intake of protein was low relative to carbohydrate. From 1884 he had the naval ration reformed to barley mixed with rice. The navy's beriberi rate fell from 23.1 per cent in 1883 to under one per cent within two years.

His explanation was wrong. Beriberi is thiamine deficiency and the protein ratio has nothing to do with it. Because the explanation was wrong and could not be defended in the terms of the German bacteriological science then ascendant, the Japanese medical establishment criticised it as lacking scientific foundation, and the army's medical bureau — Ishiguro Tadanori, and later Mori Rintarō, whom Japan knows as the novelist Ōgai — held to the position that beriberi was an infection caused by an unidentified bacillus.

In the Sino-Japanese war the navy issued barley rice and the army's medical bureau, which controlled the ration centrally, issued white rice to every unit. The army had over forty-one thousand cases of beriberi and 4,064 deaths from it, against 453 men killed in action. Beriberi killed ten times as many Japanese soldiers in that war as the Chinese army did. The navy had none.

During the Taiwan pacification a field medical officer, Toki Yorinori, issued barley rice on his own authority. The head of field sanitation at Imperial Headquarters, Ishiguro Tadanori, issued an instruction prohibiting the issue of barley rice.

Six months after the Chinese war ended, Fukuzawa Yukichi's *Jiji shinpō* published a naval medical officer's investigation of army rations and disease — the first public criticism of the army by the navy on the question. It changed nothing. In 1900, on the Boxer expedition, the army again sent white rice only, and beriberi broke out again.

In the war with Russia, the army's own statistics record 110,751 beriberi cases among the men hospitalised in theatre and about 140,931 more still with their units: over two hundred and fifty thousand cases. The recorded beriberi deaths are 5,711, with a further 21,757 classed under a separate heading, and the total generally taken as the beriberi toll is 27,468. In the same war the navy had 105 cases and three deaths.

The army did not issue its recommendation for a ration of seven parts rice to three of barley until the end of March 1905, after Port Arthur had fallen and Mukden had been taken.

Its own medical history describes the result in a phrase this module has borrowed for its title: scarcely to be paralleled in any campaign, east or west, since ancient times.

Three things have to be said about that figure and none of them softens it.

The first is a caveat about blame. Mori Ōgai was not the director of the army's medical bureau during either war — Ishiguro held the post in the Chinese war and Koike Masanao in the Russian one, and Mori became director only afterwards. Japanese commentators have argued, fairly, that the popular story overstates his personal responsibility. The institutional responsibility is not in doubt and does not depend on which man held the office.

The second is what the case actually shows about this state's method. The running finding of this study has been that the Meiji order succeeded by annexing what already worked and adapting foreign models to it — the writing schools into the elementary system, the household morality into the Rescript, the *baojia* into Taiwanese administration, the Ryukyuan tax system into Okinawan revenue. The conscription rescript of 1872 stated the method itself: founded on our own ancient system, weighing the forms of the various nations overseas. Here that method inverted. A working practice, empirically demonstrated over twenty years at a cost of nothing, was rejected because an imported theory would not accommodate it, and the imported theory won for twenty-one years, and the cost of the theory's victory was twenty-seven thousand men.

The third is structural, and it is the reason this belongs in a grim accounting rather than in a history of medicine. Module 8 established that the Meiji order contained one

component insulated from correction: an army that supplied its own minister, reached the throne without the cabinet, and held a sphere of command constitutionally beyond review. The navy's answer to beriberi was public from 1884, cheap, repeatable, and printed in a national newspaper in 1895. There was no mechanism in the Japanese state by which it could be imposed on the army, because there was no mechanism by which anything could be imposed on the army.

Twenty-seven thousand four hundred and sixty-eight is what one veto without a counter-veto cost, in one war, in the currency this module counts.

## Sixteen thousand five hundred a year

The other large uncounted item was female and it was in the mills.

Ishihara Osamu, a physician seconded to the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce for the factory investigations that preceded the Factory Act, published his findings in 1913 and gave a lecture that autumn under the title of the mill girls and tuberculosis. What he had found was this. Mortality among the women working in the textile industry ran at more than three times that of other Japanese women aged twelve to thirty-five, whose death rate was around seven per thousand. Applied across the roughly 720,000 women then in the textile trades, that excess works out, on the extrapolation Hosoi Wakizō drew from Ishihara's figures, at something like 16,500 deaths a year attributable to the work.

The mechanism had three parts, and the third is the one that matters for this ledger. Long hours and night work on two shifts broke the women's health — Ishihara called the practice an act that slowly strangles human beings over a long period. Overcrowded and insanitary dormitories turned an individual illness into an epidemic. And when a woman fell seriously ill she was sent home, without compensation and without treatment, to the village she had come from, so that the factory's own mortality statistics recorded almost none of it and the tuberculosis went out into the countryside on the trains.

Ishihara noted, in the flattest possible administrative language, that the injury to health received through industry by those who worked in industry extended also to those who had been sent home on account of it.

By the mid-1930s tuberculosis was the leading cause of death in Japan and stayed so until 1950.

Serious public measures against it began, on the standard Japanese account, when the villages had been infected badly enough that the rate of rejection at conscription examinations began to rise.

Trace that chain once, because it runs through every module of this study. The certificate of 1873 made the landlord and, in the deflation, made the tenant. The tenant's daughter went to the filature. The filature reeled the silk that was Japan's principal earner of foreign exchange, which bought the machinery and the ships. The daughter contracted tuberculosis in the dormitory and was sent home to the village without compensation. The village's young men, infected, began to fail their army medicals. And that is the point at which the state became interested.

## What was forgotten, and what was not

Which brings the module to its last question, and to a result that inverts what one expects.

The usual pattern is that the founding violence is forgotten: that after two or three generations the arrangement looks like the shape of the world, and the killing that established it becomes a date in a schoolbook. That happened here. By 1905 a Japanese adult of forty had no memory of any order but this one; the Rescript was read to children in the schoolrooms of Module 4; the peerage looked hereditary, the land certificate looked like property, and the emperor at the top of the single ladder looked, to a child in a village school, exactly as the Tokugawa status order had looked to his grandfather — like a fact of nature rather than a thing that had been built in his father's lifetime.

But there was remarkably little to forget. That is the peculiarity of this case. The founding cost eight thousand lives in a country of thirty-three million; the abolition of two hundred and sixty principalities cost none; the destruction of the warrior class cost more than the founding but was over in seven months. An order whose founding violence is that cheap does not need to bury it, and Meiji Japan did not: the Boshin War and the Satsuma rebellion are taught, commemorated, filmed and visited.

What was buried was somewhere else entirely. The beriberi figures were in the army's own medical history and did not become part of what Japan knew about its wars. Ishihara's report was published in 1913 and acted upon a decade later for a different reason. The Urakami exiles, the destruction of Yanaka village, the Taiwan pacification, and the fabrication of the treason case were not events anyone in 1912 was invited to think about.

So the finding is this: **in an order that inherits rather than conquers, the forgetting does not attach to the founding. It attaches to the running.** There is no great original crime to be repressed, and so the amnesia settles instead on the ordinary, distributed, administrative killing that the arrangement did while it worked — which is

far larger, far less dramatic, and far easier to lose, because none of it happened on a battlefield and none of it has a monument.

## Reading the accounting against the framework

Three findings.

**The metabolic ledger is not about rulers.** It records the disruption of the coordination that holds a dense population above the land's carrying capacity, and it is called only when that coordination breaks. Meiji Japan changed everything about who ruled and how, and changed nothing about the machinery that fed people, and the note was never called: the population rose without interruption from something over thirty-three million to about fifty. The framework should therefore separate the two questions rather than treating a violent change of regime as presumptively metabolic. **A transfer of an intact productive apparatus incurs no metabolic debt however complete the political rupture; the debt is incurred by the destruction of the apparatus, not by the replacement of its owners.**

**A grim accounting that counts only the sword will systematically undercount a modernising order.** The largest identifiable death tolls of the Meiji period, apart from the two foreign wars, were not inflicted by violence at all. Twenty-seven thousand four hundred and sixty-eight soldiers died of a preventable deficiency disease in one war because an institution preferred a theory it could defend to a result it could not explain. Something on the order of sixteen thousand women a year died of a tuberculosis manufactured by night work and dormitories and then distributed into the villages by the practice of dismissing the sick. Neither appears on a casualty list. Both are larger than anything the Meiji state did with troops inside Japan. **Where an order governs through the administration of bodies — rations, shifts, dormitories, medical examinations, dismissal — its principal killing is administrative, and the ledger must be assembled from bureaucratic statistics rather than from battle returns.**

**And the insulated component has a price, which can be stated in dead men.** Module 8 identified the army as the one part of the Meiji arrangement whose position could be defended without defending the arrangement, and traced the consequence in 1912 through a ministerial vacancy. This module supplies the other consequence. Between 1884 and 1905 there existed, in public, in Japan, a cheap and repeatedly demonstrated method of preventing beriberi, which the navy used and which the army refused, and there was no authority in the Japanese state that could make the army take it. **The cost of an insulated component in a hierarchy is measurable, and the place to look for it is not in its politics but in its dead** — because a body that answers to

nobody will eventually be wrong about something, and when it is, nothing corrects it, and the correction that never comes has a number attached.

## A note on sources.

The population trajectory rests on the 1872 register figures cited in the Landscape module, with the terminal figure for the end of the period given as an approximation; no continuous series was consulted for this module and the absence of famine and demographic reversal is asserted on the basis that none appears in the standard reference literature consulted throughout this study, not on the basis of a demographic analysis. Readers should treat the negative metabolic finding as a considered inference rather than a demonstrated one.

The internal sword ledger is drawn entirely from the sources cited in Modules 1, 2, 3, 5, 7 and 10 — the Boshin casualty compilation, the Satsuma rebellion figures with their acknowledged inconsistencies, the Ise punishment figure, the Urakami deportation and death figures, the 1911 executions, and the Hibiya casualties — and is not separately sourced here.

The Taiwan material is from the Chinese and Japanese Wikipedia articles on the Taiwanese resistance, the Japanese period in Taiwan and the war of 1895, and from a Baidu encyclopaedia entry. The Japanese landing force of about 49,000 including the Imperial Guard division, the Taiwanese regular force of about 33,000 and militia of about 100,000, the Governor-General's declaration of complete pacification on 8 November 1895, the resumption of guerrilla resistance from late December, and its continuation until the killing of Lin Shao-mao in May 1902, are from the Chinese Wikipedia articles. The terms of the bandit punishment ordinance of November 1898 — its seven articles, its retrospective effect, and its prescription of death for ringleaders, instigators and followers alike and for a long schedule of acts — are from the Baidu entry, which is also the sole source consulted for the claim that thirty-two thousand people were executed under it in the first five years, amounting to over one per cent of the Taiwanese population. That figure is politically contested, appears here without corroboration from Japanese administrative sources, and is reported as a claim rather than adopted. The same applies to the range of six thousand to thirty thousand given for the Yunlin reprisals of 1896 and to the figure of at least 1,988 Japanese personnel killed by the resistance, both from Chinese-language sources. This module makes no independent estimate of the Taiwanese death toll and states only that it exceeded the Meiji government's internal toll in Japan, which the ranges support on any reading.

The Russo-Japanese figures — 999,868 mobilised outside Japan, 46,423 killed in action, 153,623 wounded, 251,185 hospitalised in theatre — are quoted in the

Japanese Wikipedia article on the history of beriberi in Japan from the Army Ministry's *Meiji sanjūshichi-hachinen sen'eki rikugun eiseishi*, volume two, and from a compilation by an army medical officer, Nishimura Fumio; the further figure of about 37,200 dying of wounds and sickness is from a Japanese medical journal article. No independent verification of the underlying volumes was undertaken.

The beriberi account is drawn principally from Urashima Mitsuyoshi's 2001 article in *Shūkan Igakukai Shinbun* published by Igaku Shoin, and from the Japanese Wikipedia article on the history of beriberi in Japan, corroborated on the main figures by two Japanese general-interest articles. From these come: the annual national toll of ten to thirty thousand in the Meiji period; Takaki Kanehiro's British training, his observation that the Royal Navy lacked the disease, his protein-to-carbohydrate hypothesis, his ration reform from 1884, and the fall in naval incidence from 23.1 per cent in 1883 to under one per cent within two years; the criticism of his theory by the medical establishment as lacking a medical basis; the army medical bureau's adherence to the bacterial theory under Ishiguro Tadanori and Mori Rintarō; the Sino-Japanese war figures of over 41,000 army beriberi cases and 4,064 beriberi deaths against 453 killed in action, with the navy having none; the central control of rations by the Army Ministry's medical bureau; Ishiguro's instruction prohibiting the issue of barley rice after Toki Yorinori issued it on his own authority during the Taiwan campaign; the publication of a naval investigation of rations and disease in Fukuzawa's *Jiji shinpō* about six months after the war, described as the first public naval criticism of the army; the white-rice-only ration on the Boxer expedition and the resulting outbreak; the Russo-Japanese case totals of 110,751 hospitalised and about 140,931 with units, and the death figures of 5,711 plus 21,757 taken together as 27,468; the naval figures of 105 cases and three deaths; the army's recommendation of a seven-to-three rice-and-barley ration at the end of March 1905 after Port Arthur and Mukden; and the phrase from the army's own record describing the toll as scarcely paralleled in any campaign east or west since ancient times, which is quoted here at second hand from the Urashima article and has not been checked against the original volume. The caveat that Mori was not medical bureau director during either war, that Ishiguro and Koike held the post, and that Japanese commentators dispute the popular attribution of responsibility to Mori, is from a Japanese critical essay which argues that the standard account is unfair to him; that essay also disputes some of the received narrative on other points, and this module has adopted only its factual correction on the office-holders.

The mill-girl material is from the Shōgakukan entry on Ishihara Osamu's *Jokō to kekkaku* reproduced at Kotobank, which supplies the October 1913 lecture to the Kokka Igakukai, its publication as an appendix in 1914, the underlying 1910 factory

hygiene investigation by the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce, Ishihara's identification of two-shift night work as the cause, his description of it as an act slowly strangling human beings over a long period, and his thesis that the textile industry's reliance on migrant labour from the villages was the soil of tuberculosis in Japan. The comparative mortality — more than three times the rate of other women aged twelve to thirty-five, against about seven per thousand — and the extrapolation to roughly 16,500 deaths a year across some 720,000 textile workers are from an Iwanami serial essay on Hosoi Wakizō's *Jokō aishi*, which reports Hosoi as making the calculation from Ishihara's figures; the extrapolation is Hosoi's and not this study's, and it should be treated as a contemporary estimate rather than a demographic finding. A Hosei University Ōhara Institute working paper supplies Ishihara's observation that the harm extended to those sent home on account of illness, and the mechanism of long hours, night work, overcrowded dormitories and transmission to the countryside. The point that tuberculosis became the leading cause of death in Japan from 1935 to 1950, that neither the firms nor the state acted while it was killing the mill workers, and that serious measures followed the rise in conscription rejection rates, is from the Japan Federation of Democratic Medical Institutions' historical note and is the received account in that literature rather than a finding of this study.

The account of the founding's cheapness, the inheritance of an intact apparatus, and the running finding about annexation and adapted models rest on the Landscape and Modules 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6. The propositions that the metabolic ledger tracks coordination rather than rulers, that an accounting confined to the sword will undercount an administrative order, that the forgetting in an inherited order attaches to the running rather than the founding, and that the cost of an insulated component is measurable in its dead, are this study's own arguments and are offered for testing.

# EIGHTEEN YEARS

*Module 12 · Convergence and Divergence — where this case falls in the collection, the only order in it that ran the pattern from both ends inside one generation, and the strongest case for the defence, stated at its full weight and answered*

## What this case shares with every other

The framework's elements are all present here and all of them behaved.

There was a floor of force, and Module 1 priced it and dated the moment it became transferable. There was a settlement of who got what among the armed, executed between 1873 and 1876, and Module 2 read it off the certificates and the bonds. There was a robe, and Module 3 found the man who specified it saying in a closed room exactly what it was for. There was a formation, and Module 4 found the state's own document naming the timing lever. There was a cost column for the ruled, and Module 5 found the corridor between submission and insurrection narrowed to nothing and kept that way for thirty-two years. There was an extraction system, and Module 6 found the surplus. There was an information regime, and Module 7 watched it learn its trade. There was a default among the elite, and Module 8 found where it broke. There were liberties, and Module 9 traced every one of them to a quarrel among men who held office.

And the order this one replaced was itself a naturalised former conquest — the Tokugawa settlement of 1600, which had become the furniture of reality so completely that nobody inside it experienced hereditary status as the residue of a victory. Beneath that lay another: an imperial warrant drafted into law in 701, on descent rather than righteousness, itself the settled residue of a much older consolidation. The Meiji men did not meet a baseline. They reached past one built order to an older one and reactivated it, and the reactivation worked because both were, by then, simply the way the world was.

None of that distinguishes Japan. It is the ordinary condition of every case in this collection.

## Where this case diverges

The divergences are worth listing together, because they are what this study contributes and because several of them are corrections rather than exceptions.

The founding transaction was not a taking but an assumption of liabilities: a working country with a registered population, functioning villages and an intact commercial economy, acquired complete with a stipend bill running at a third of revenue, domain debts averaging three years' income, and treaties the new men had not signed and could not revise. The first binding constraint on this order was not the ruled but the previous order's creditors — and the creditor it chose to pay, ninety-two per cent in cash to foreigners against a sixth in paper to its own merchants, identified the audience whose recognition it thought it could not do without.

The floor was borrowed before it was built. In 1871 the central government commanded no permanent force of its own, borrowed between six and ten thousand men from three of its own principalities, spent them on an act abolishing all three, and used the proceeds to build a conscript army. The lending is the thing that needs explaining, and the explanation is that it was not a transfer between institutions but a faction ceasing to occupy two positions and beginning to occupy one.

The first robe failed and the second added nothing. The Great Teaching of 1870 imported the shape of a creed with missionaries and collapsed in two years. The Rescript of 1890 imported nothing at all: every virtue in it was already held, and the innovation was a terminus. The same operation appears in the schools, where an imported individualist ordinance produced burned buildings and thirty-five per cent enrolment, and annexation of the writing schools — the same room, the same master, the same children — produced ninety-six.

Exit existed in volume and did not act as a check, because the exiting person kept paying. Twenty-eight thousand applied for six hundred places on a Hawaiian cane contract in 1884, and the remittances came back to the villages' schools and temples and shrines — the very local burdens the centre had devolved during the deflation that drove them out.

Monetisation did not abolish payment in kind; it moved the line and enriched whoever stood on it. Thirty-four to the state in money, thirty-four to the landlord in rice, thirty-two to the man who grew it.

The distant audience was not a metropole but a set of creditor powers, and its leverage was purchasable. It bought real reforms — the Christian prohibition lifted, an informer's reward struck out, codes written — and when Japan finally bought the leverage back in 1899, the check lapsed, and the treatment of dissent hardened rather than softened.

The default was broken not by the group that stopped benefiting but by the best-provided group in the arrangement, because it alone held a position defensible without the arrangement.

The liberties came from factional fights and survived because a faction must state its claim generally to make it a claim at all.

The metabolic note was never called, because nothing that fed anybody was broken.

And the largest death tolls were administrative rather than military.

## The case that runs both ways

But the thing that makes this study valuable to the collection is none of those. It is that Meiji Japan is the only order here that appears on both sides of the same relationship, and does so inside a single working lifetime.

In 1858 the shogunate signed five commercial treaties which gave the western powers consular jurisdiction over their own nationals on Japanese soil, denied Japan the right to set its own tariffs, and granted most-favoured-nation treatment running one way. A supplementary convention in 1866 fixed import duties at a flat five per cent. The men who made the Restoration spent the 1860s denouncing those treaties, and spent the 1870s and 1880s in a diplomacy whose single object was their removal.

In September 1875 a Japanese warship, the *Un'yō*, put a boat ashore near the Korean fortifications at Kanghwa and was fired on. Japan treated the incident as the ground for a demand.

On the twenty-sixth of February 1876, at Kanghwa, Kuroda Kiyotaka as plenipotentiary and Inoue Kaoru as his deputy signed a treaty of friendship with the Korean court. Its first article declared Korea a self-governing state with rights equal to Japan's, the purpose being to sever the Qing suzerainty. It opened Pusan and, subsequently, Inchon and Wonsan. Its eighth and tenth articles conceded Japanese consular jurisdiction. Its attached trade regulations gave Japanese goods a unilateral exemption from duty. It carried no term.

Eighteen years after the last shogunal signature, the same instrument, pointed the other way, by men who had built their careers on hating it. And in one respect worse: the western powers had capped Japan's tariff at five per cent, while Japan gave itself, in Korea, a rate of nothing.

Two facts prevent this being read as an unconscious repetition. The first is that Japan had already signed, in 1871, a treaty with Qing China that was substantially equal, so it knew perfectly well what an equal treaty looked like and had drafted one. The second is Inoue Kaoru himself. In 1863 he had been smuggled out of Yokohama at the risk of his life, leaving the country being a capital offence, to find out in London how the western powers did what they did. Thirteen years later he was at Kanghwa doing it.

And the pattern continued in the forms the European studies in this collection have documented in detail. Taiwan was taken in 1895 and pacified over seven years under a bandit ordinance that made resistance capital with retrospective effect, and administered through a revived Qing system of household surveillance and collective responsibility — the incumbent apparatus annexed rather than replaced, exactly as the writing schools had been. Okinawa was governed under a deliberate policy of preserving the old customs so as not to provoke the former Ryukyuan ruling class, with the consequence that its islanders went on paying a poll tax for twenty-four years after annexation. Korea became a protectorate in 1905 and was annexed in 1910.

That is the collection's most useful finding from this study, and it is not a comfortable one for anybody. The colonial pattern this project has traced through the French in Algeria and Vietnam, the British in Kenya and Iraq and Jamaica, the Russians in Turkestan and the Spanish in Peru is not a European pathology, a racial disposition or a cultural inheritance. It is what a state with a floor does when it meets a state without one. The variable is not who you are. It is which side of the gun you are standing on, and Japan changed sides in eighteen years and behaved, from the new side, exactly as its predecessors had.

## The case for the defence

Now the counter-position, and it must be given its full weight, because it is strong and because a great many serious people hold it.

It runs as follows.

The alternative to what the Meiji men did was not a gentler Japan. It was China. The Ansei treaties were not negotiated; they were extracted from a government that could not refuse, by powers that had just spent two decades demonstrating on the Chinese coast what happened to those who tried. Every literate Japanese knew it: Wei Yuan's survey of the maritime nations, written in the humiliation after Nanjing, went through some twenty-two Japanese editions in three years and was read by the men who made the Restoration. The lesson on the page was not theoretical. A large, old, administratively sophisticated empire had met the same ships and was being taken apart in instalments.

And of every non-western state that met the industrial powers in the nineteenth century, Japan alone was not. China was dismembered by concession and indemnity. Egypt was taken for its debts. India was ruled outright. Persia was divided into spheres. The Ottoman lands were carved. The cost column of the alternative is not blank; it is the cost column of China between 1850 and 1949, and it is counted in tens of millions.

Nor was survival the whole of the achievement. In forty years this order took a country with a literate stratum and gave it a literate population: enrolment near-universal by 1905, and girls carried from twenty-eight per cent to ninety-three in eighteen years. The population rose from something over thirty-three million to about fifty without a single famine. It built courts that in 1891 refused a cabinet demanding a man's life for reasons of state, and a parliament that fought the government to a standstill through the 1890s, and a press that survived everything done to it. It removed the consular courts in 1899 and recovered tariff autonomy by 1911. It industrialised without surrendering ownership of its own commanding heights to foreign capital, which is more than most of the countries that industrialised after it managed.

And the men who did it were not monsters and did not enrich themselves in the ordinary way. They committed capital offences to go and look before they held power. They wrote their method down honestly and followed it. And what they liquidated first was their own class: its hereditary income converted to depreciating paper, its swords taken off the street, its monopoly of arms handed to farmers' second sons. Whatever else that is, it is not the behaviour of an elite protecting itself.

A study that counts the price and does not count what was bought is not an accounting. It is an indictment with footnotes.

## The answer

That case is largely correct, and this study will not pretend otherwise. Three things need saying in reply, and none of them is a dismissal.

**The first is that the defence carries most of the account, and should be allowed to.** The threat was real. A state facing consular courts on its own soil, a tariff written by foreigners, and the visible dismemberment of the largest empire in Asia had to build a floor and a revenue quickly, and this study has found no evidence that a gentler route to the same survival was available in the time available. The abolition of the domains, the conscript army, the land tax reform, the school system, the codes, the constitution — the great bulk of what was done and most of what it cost — are carried by the defence, and this study says so.

**The second is that the defence does not carry everything, and there is a clean test for the remainder.** If the costs were the price of survival, they ought to have fallen when survival was secured.

Extraterritoriality ended in 1899. What follows is this. In 1900, a Public Peace Police Law forbidding workers and tenant farmers to combine and barring women from political societies and from political meetings altogether; in the same year, the rule reserving the service ministries to serving officers. In 1908, a treason article prescribing

death alone, with no appeal, tried at a single instance. In 1910, several hundred arrests and a fabricated conspiracy; in 1911, twelve hangings. In 1910, the annexation of Korea. In 1912, the army bringing down a cabinet by declining to name a minister.

The line goes the wrong way, and Module 7 identified the mechanism: the external audience constrained this order only while it held something the order could not otherwise obtain, and the order bought that thing and thereby abolished the constraint. The survival argument explains the period from 1868 to 1894 very well. It explains the period from 1899 to 1912 hardly at all, and the things done in the second period were done by the same men, in the same institutions, with the emergency over.

**The third is the deepest, and it refuses both flattery and demonisation.** The achievement and the cost were not two things, one of which might have been had without the other. They were one instrument, described twice.

The single ladder of formation that ran from the household through the schoolmaster to the throne is what made Japan coordinated, mobilisable and literate — and it is the same single ladder that left no rival interpreter standing anywhere in the country when the terminus was wrong. The insulated army that could not be captured by parties, and could therefore be built fast, trained hard and sent to Mukden, is the same insulated army that killed 27,468 of its own men rather than concede a point of medical theory, and that ended cabinet government in December 1912 by not filling a vacancy. The nine men outside the constitution who could act decisively because no law bound them are, for exactly that reason, the body that could never be reformed, criticised, admitted to or succeeded — so that when they died, nothing inherited the function they had performed, and the only institution left that could impose its will on a cabinet was the one holding the army.

The unarguable apex that Itō told the Privy Council was the only axis available is what made this order cheap enough to build in twenty years on a bankrupt treasury. It is also what Ozaki described from the floor of the Diet in 1913 as a parapet to shoot from, with rescripts for ammunition — and what supplied, in 1911, both the offence that carried no defence and the mercy that had no criterion.

So the verdict this study reaches is not that the cost was worth it, and not that the achievement was a fraud. It is that the thing which saved Japan in 1895 was the thing which destroyed it in 1945, and that these were not two policies but one construction, and that fifty years is roughly how long a well-built order takes to be killed by its own load-bearing member.

## Reading the whole against the framework

One contribution, and it is the study's.

This collection has been assembling a description of how conquering orders work, drawn overwhelmingly from cases in which the conqueror was European and the conquered was not. That sampling carries an inference nobody in the project has asserted but which the material invites — that the pattern has something to do with who the Europeans were.

Meiji Japan removes the inference. Here is a state that was on the receiving end of the exact instrument in 1858, that understood it precisely, that sent men abroad at the risk of their lives to learn how it worked, that spent forty years and two wars getting out from under it — and that, eighteen years after being subjected to it, applied it to its nearest neighbour in a harsher form than it had itself suffered, and then ran, in Taiwan and Okinawa and Korea, the same operations this collection has documented in Algeria and Kenya and Turkestan: the incumbent extraction apparatus annexed rather than rebuilt, the old elite's customs preserved to keep it quiet, formation withheld from the majority, and a governor-general legislating outside the metropolitan law.

**The colonial pattern is not a property of any people. It is the behaviour of a state that has a floor toward a state that has not, and it is available to anyone who acquires one.** The only variable that has ever mattered is which side of the gun a state is standing on, and the Meiji case shows that the variable can flip inside a single career — that Inoue Kaoru, who broke the law of his own country in 1863 to go and see how the powers did it, was at Kanghwa in 1876 doing it, and that nothing in him needed to change for that to happen except his position.

Which is the whole of what this project has been arguing from the beginning, arriving from an unexpected direction: that these arrangements are not made by the character of the men in them but by the geometry of where those men stand, and that the same man, moved, will build the same machine facing the other way.

## A note on sources.

The Kanghwa treaty is the only new primary matter in this module, and it is paraphrased rather than quoted; the treaty text was not read for this study. The Heibonsha entry reproduced at Kotobank supplies the date of 26 February 1876, the place of signature, the plenipotentiaries Kuroda Kiyotaka and Inoue Kaoru on the Japanese side and Sin Hon and Yun Chasung on the Korean, the twelve articles, and the four principal provisions: Korea declared a self-governing state with rights equal to Japan's under the first article; the mutual exchange and residence of envoys under the second; the opening of two further ports beyond Pusan, later determined as Inchon and Wonsan, under the fourth and fifth; and the residence of Japanese officers at the open ports with recognition of extraterritoriality under the eighth and tenth. The

Yamakawa entry at Historist gives the same substance. The Japanese Wikipedia article supplies the treaty's structure of twelve articles with eleven articles of annexed documents and eleven trade regulations, the characterisation of the unilateral consular jurisdiction and loss of tariff autonomy as unequal provisions, the *Un'yō* incident of 1875 as the occasion, and the argument over Qing suzerainty that produced the first article. The unilateral duty-free privilege conferred by the annexed trade regulations, as distinct from a mere loss of tariff autonomy, is from a Japanese world-history reference site and from a Japanese cultural reference site, both of which state it in those terms; it has not been checked against the regulations themselves and should be verified before further weight is placed on it. The absence of a stated term, and the observation that Japan imposed on Korea an inequality exceeding what it was itself suffering less than twenty years after being subjected to it, are quoted at second hand from Nakatsuka Akira's *Kore dake wa shitte okitai Nihon to Kankoku Chōsen no rekishi* by way of a Japanese blog post reproducing the passage; Nakatsuka's book has not been consulted directly and the point is credited to him as a paraphrase. The existence of a substantially equal Japan–Qing treaty in 1871 is from the Japanese cultural reference site cited above.

Everything else in this module rests on the Landscape and Modules 1 to 11 and on the sources cited there, and is not separately re-sourced. In particular: the Ansei treaties and the 1866 tariff convention, and the circulation of Wei Yuan's *Haiguo tuzhi* in Japan, are from the Landscape module; the borrowed floor and its dating from Module 1; the settlement, the certificates and the bonds from Module 2; Itō's Privy Council statement — which rests, as noted there, on a single reproduction of the record and should be verified — from Module 3; the school enrolment series from the Ministry of Education's official history, cited in Module 4; the Hawaiian emigration figures and the Wakayama remittance evidence from Module 5; the division of shares and the indemnity allocation from Module 6; the press regime, the treason article and the 1911 executions from Module 7; the genrō, the peerage, the civil service ordinance of 1899 and the service-minister rule of 1900 from Module 8; the Ōtsu case and the electoral qualification from Module 9; Ozaki's speech of 5 February 1913 from Module 10; and the beriberi figures, the Taiwan material with its contested ranges, and the Okinawan poll tax from Modules 5 and 11. The dates for the ending of extraterritoriality in 1899 and the completion of tariff autonomy in 1911, and for the Korean protectorate of 1905 and annexation of 1910, are standard chronology and have not been separately verified in the course of this study.

The comparative claims about China, Egypt, India, Persia and the Ottoman lands are stated at the level of general knowledge and are not sourced; they are offered as the

counter-position's own framing rather than as findings of this study, and a reader who wished to press the counter-position further would need to establish them properly. The characterisation of the Tokugawa settlement as a naturalised former conquest, and of the imperial warrant of 701 as an earlier one, rests on the preceding study in this series. The account of the European colonial cases invoked in the closing section rests on the other studies in this collection and not on new research.

The proposition that the colonial pattern is a property of position rather than of people, and the closing argument that the instrument which secured this order was the same instrument that destroyed it, are this study's own and are offered for testing.

*Part of the collection* Patterns of Power. *Tested, never revealed.*